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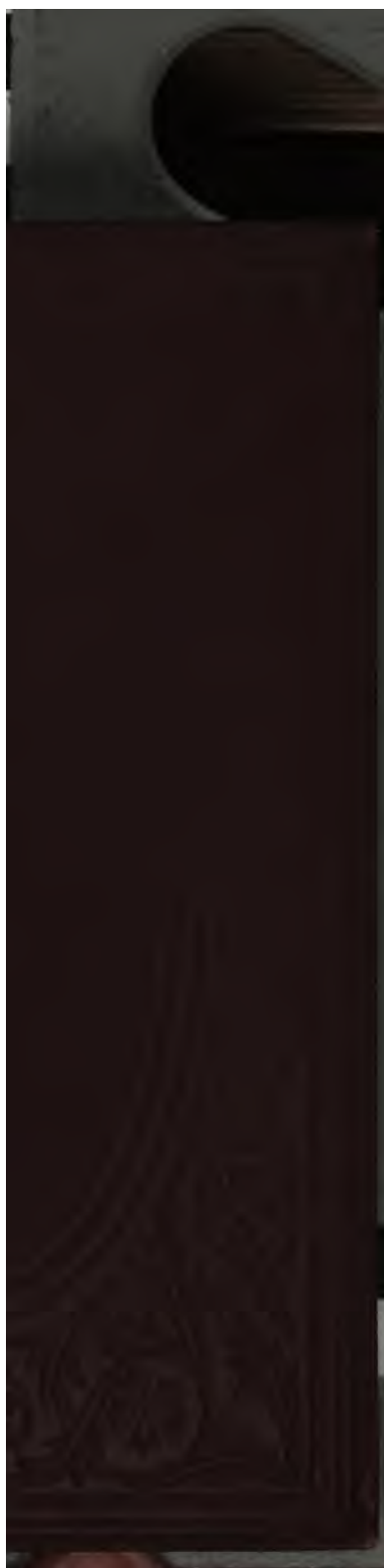
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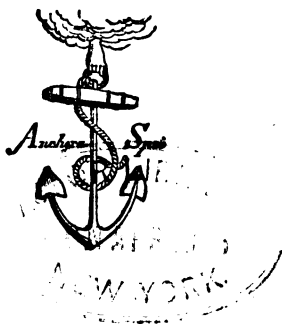
**ALEXANDER STRAHAN, PUBLISHER**

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# STORIES THAT MIGHT BE TRUE

ETC.

BY DORA GREENWELL



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M A R Y.

SCENE—*A Farm in the clearings of a  
Canadian Forest.*

*Mary.*

**Y**OU must not leave us yet awhile ; the kindred  
That you are seeking know not of your com-  
ing ;

And so delay of yours can little grieve them,  
Were it a year, far less a single day—

*Traveller.* Nay ! I have far outstay'd my time  
already.

*Mary.* But not your welcome, wait but till to-  
morrow,

Then I will bid you speed upon your journey.

*Trav.* So it was yesterday with you, good mis-  
tress,

And when to-morrow comes 'twill be the same,  
Still you will frame some kind excuse to keep me,—  
And if I stay much longer it will be  
But all the harder then to leave behind me

A house like this, where all is rest and comfort :  
For on the waves I have been tossed so long  
Like sea-weed, drifting, shifting, hither, thither  
Among the rocks and reefs, with nought to hold by,  
That Home, the sound we English love so well,  
Has been as strange to me as to those nations  
That have no word, they tell me, to express it ;  
And in my heart perhaps I fain could find it,  
To cast my anchor in a spot like this,  
And stay till even one as kind as you are  
Might tire at last of the old, useless stranger.

*Mary.* And what am I myself but old and useless ?

I sit beside the fire or in the sunshine,  
An old woman, good for nothing but to talk  
And please the little children with my stories  
Of the old country as they call it here ;  
And they have heard my tales so oft, that when  
I chance to halt they quickly help me onwards ;  
But since you came to freshen up my memory,  
Things half forgotten, thick as bees in summer,  
Have swarmed and crowded on my mind so fast,  
That I have store to last me out my life ;  
I think it is your voice that brings around me  
The voices that were round me in my youth ;  
You have not been, you say, in pleasant Yorkshire

---

For half a life-time, yet I think your heart  
Forgets it not entirely, while your tongue  
Remembers it so kindly.

*Trav.* And so you know me for a Yorkshireman!  
And I that have been round the world so oft,  
'Mid all my gains and losses, still have kept  
A touch that speaks of Home! well then, it seems  
The tongue is like the heart, forgetting slowly  
What it hath learnt the soonest, like the lessons  
That, taught in our first childhood, we remember  
When many a thing between escapes for ever.

*Mary.* Nay, not in childhood only, but in youth,—  
The things that happened then so sweetly cross  
Our spirits, that I sometimes think they lie  
Within the heart, as when I was a girl  
I used to lay the things I treasured most,  
Strewed o'er with lavender and withered rose-leaves;  
There was a hymn-tune that but yesternight  
You hummed above my grandchild in its cradle,  
The good old Psalm, " How sweet to dwell as  
Brethren

In kindness, and in offices of love,"—  
Oh! how it brought the pleasant Sundays back,  
The Sundays when I used to sing it, sitting  
By William, looking both on the same book:—  
Here, one may say, 'tis evermore a Sabbath,

Like the World's first One, when its Maker looked  
Upon his work and saw that it was good ;  
There are no work-day sounds within these woods ;  
Yet not so dear their deep unbroken silence,  
As was the quiet of the Christian Sabbath :  
The sweet unwonted stillness of the air  
When those sounds ceased awhile, and man with  
                  them

Ceased from his labours, resting in the sight  
Of Him that gave that blessed breathing time.  
My father was a strict man in his duties ;  
Careful, it might be, anxious overmuch  
For this world's substance, yet forgetting not  
To seek the truer riches, well he wrought  
His six days' labour out with the Commandment,  
And rested with it on the day appointed.  
I think I see him with his Sunday face,  
The face that suited with his Sunday garments,  
The wrinkles of the busy week smoothed down,  
Walking to Church with us his children round him,  
Never so happy or so proud as then,  
Exchanging, as we moved along, grave greetings  
With friendly neighbours, pausing on his way  
To hear the bells' last merry chime, and see  
From the stone gateway of the ancient Hall  
The good old Squire come forth with his sweet  
                  daughters.

---

Oh ! how I loved the Sunday ! still I love it  
As the hymn teaches, best of all the seven :  
But *then*, I fear me for far other reasons  
Than make it dear unto my spirit now !—  
For then I sat by William in the church,  
And then I walked with William in the evenings,  
The long bright Summer evenings—if I had  
A wish on earth, it was that all the week  
Were Sunday from one end unto the other,  
And Summer, only Summer all the year !—  
How often in my thoughts I walk alone  
O'er all the spots where once I walked with him,  
Talking at first of many things so gaily—  
Of everything except the only thing  
That both were thinking of, before he spoke  
And told me that he loved ; when afterwards  
We walked o'er the same ground, how all was  
changed,  
For then we were too happy to be gay ;  
I never knew what care or grieving was  
'Till I knew William ; but I never knew  
Until I knew him, that there is a joy  
Worth all we pay for it : yes ! none so gay,  
So goes the saying, as the merry beggars  
With nought to care or fret for, nought to lose ;  
But wealth brings care with it, and when the heart



Grows rich, it watches anxious o'er its treasure  
With busy fears it never knew before ;  
And we were grave and anxious, oftentimes silent  
Perchance, but never happier than then ;  
And when the walk was over, and we parted,  
Still William leant across our garden gate,  
Still there seemed always something left to say,  
Still some last word yet sweeter than the last  
That went before it ;—I should ask your pardon  
For wearying you with talk of these old times,  
But if I thus forget you are a stranger,  
Yours is the blame that make me to forget it,  
As there you sit and look so like a friend—

*Trav.* I think your heart would entertain the  
stranger

Where'er it met him, but it seems to me,  
The farther we have left our home behind us,  
The nearer do we feel to those that hold  
With us some link, though slight in common there,  
As claims of distant kindred rise in value  
When closer ties have failed us,—meeting here,  
Both born in Yorkshire, we are friends at once,  
Old friends as we had known each other all our lives ;  
And if you still will talk to me like one,  
I will put off my journey till to-morrow,  
Just for the sake of hearing you : for I

---

Had once a home like yours, and there is still  
A chain between my heart and it that seems  
To tighten with each word that you are speaking.

*Mary.* Ours was a pleasant farm : a sudden  
turning

In a deep lane of hawthorn, white in summer  
With flowering elder, brought you where it lay  
Shut in among its close-clipped beechen hedges,  
Just like a place forgotten by the world ;  
It was a sunny spot, and all around it  
A kind of cheerful stillness, broken only  
By noises that had in their very sound  
A sort of quietness, because they told  
That there were none but harmless creatures near ;  
And all without us, all within, was quiet,  
For ours was a grave house ; my mother died  
When we were young ; my father, as I said,  
Was a strict man, though kind, or meaning kindly,  
Yet in his serious aspect and slow speech  
Was something that rebuked our childish mirth.  
We loved him as he loved his heavenly Father,  
Not with the perfect love that casts out fear.  
God's word was honoured in our house ; we came,  
My father loved to tell us, of a stock  
That prized it so, they left their homes that were  
In foreign parts, and gave up trades and calling,

Going, like Abraham, they knew not whither,  
Rather than give up *that*, the heritage  
More valued still, the word of Truth and Life;  
The spirit of those fore-elders lived in him;  
A serious spirit, yet perchance akin  
More to the rigour of the older Scriptures,  
Than to the second kindlier Dispensation;  
Living by law, and letter, and commandment,  
Yet lacking surely somewhat of the love  
The Gospel tells us best fulfils them all;  
But peace be to his memory! holding fast  
Integrity, he walked before his God  
One of a faithful upright generation,  
The world that loves them little, ill could spare.  
I was the only daughter left with him  
For many years, my sisters marrying young;  
And this, I think, because I knew his ways  
And kept the house for him and for my brothers,  
And looked to every thing, might be one reason  
(Although he owned it not unto himself)  
Why still he put all talk of marriage by  
From year to year, and when we spoke of it,  
Still shook his head, and put us off with saws  
Made but to vex the trustful heart of Love,  
The more in that they bear some show of wisdom,  
Such as "Wed soon, and there'll be time for rueing,"

“ When poverty comes in, love takes his flight.”—

*Trav. (smiling)* And William, then, I fancy,  
was not rich,

Or as they say in Yorkshire, well-to-do?

*Mary.* His father died when he was young ; his  
mother

Had held a little farm not far from ours,  
As best she could since then, and William  
Had worked for her and for the younger ones,  
'Till as he oft has told me, he ne'er knew  
The feeling of being young or like a boy,  
The cares of life set in on him so early ;  
And he was thoughtful far beyond his years,  
Although I do not think he ever had  
A thought except for others till he knew me,  
And then he said that Love had made him selfish  
In making him so happy, still contriving  
And planning how we might be happier still ;  
We used to hope my father, when we married,  
Would set us up upon a larger farm,  
Where we could take his mother home to us,  
And William used to say, that he would wait  
As long for me as Jacob did for Rachel,  
(Serving that hard apprenticeship twice over)  
But could not, like him, think it but a day !  
For time wore on, and still we hoped and waited,

Until at last, with William and my heart  
Persuading me together, I begun  
To think my father, that withheld consent  
Still for some fancied reason, might not grieve  
Perchance if it were taken without asking ;  
I saw that he loved William more and more,  
And thought that he would end where I begun,  
By loving him so much that everything  
I did for love of him would find excuse ;  
And so at last worn out with hope deferred  
Too long, (I tell you what you guess) we married  
When I was staying with some distant kindred,  
And spoke to none, not even William's mother  
For fear of mixing others with our blame ;  
And I came home again ; we fixed to speak  
Unto my father in some happy hour,  
And say what we had done, but much my heart  
Misgave me, and I could not bear to meet  
His eye, or hear him speak unto me kindly  
And know I was deceiving him, although  
But for a time : my youngest brother George,  
That in the world I loved next best to William,  
Just then came back from sea ; we sat one evening  
Just as the short November day was closing  
All in our little parlour round the fire—  
My brothers had come home from work, my sisters

---

Had both called in to have a look at George—  
I never saw my father seem so happy  
As then he did to have us all about him ;  
And as they talked together in the gloaming  
I drew my wheel beside me, and seemed bent  
Upon my spinning, but I only hoped  
Its busy hum might still the busier thoughts  
That turned, as it was turning, in my brain :  
My father said, “ Ay, Mary will not waste  
An hour as we do, there she sits and spins,  
Still for the wedding ! well, when that day comes,  
No one will have a better plenished house  
Than she and William,”—almost before  
I knew what I was saying, as if then  
The words that had been framed upon my lips  
So oft before to die there, came to life,  
I said, and did not tremble, “ Oh dear father,  
That day is past already, I am married ”—  
“ Married ! ” he cried, and started from his chair,  
“ Who knew of this ? who planned it with you ?  
married ? ”

I said, “ We married when I was away—  
There is no living soul that knows of it  
Except ourselves ; he answered, “ It is well,  
For then I have but *one* ungrateful child ;  
Go to the home that you have chosen,—now

You have no other ; go unto your husband,  
And make to him a more obedient wife  
Than you have been a daughter—ay, make much  
Of him, for now you have not any Father.”  
There was a dreadful stillness in the room  
When he had done : it seemed to me all full  
Of stony faces, no one moved or spoke—  
I thought my sisters would have spoken for me,  
For they were married, and they must have loved,  
But not as I did, or they *would* have spoken,  
Their husbands were good men, but not like Wil-  
liam ;

And there was silence, but I heard the words  
“ You have no father,” sounding in my ears,  
And all things darkened round me—then I felt  
An arm that caught me ere I fell, and heard  
My brother George’s voice that said, “ Oh father !  
You must forgive poor Mary—she has been  
Such a kind sister, such a loving daughter,  
The first offence, they say, should find some favour,  
And Mary never crossed your will before,  
And never would have done so, but for love  
Of William that deserves her love so well.”  
But at his words my father’s brow grew dark,  
He clenched his teeth as if to bar some word—  
I dared not stay to hear it, but rose up,

---

And crying, " Brother, anger not our father  
For one like me, that have done too much wrong  
Already without that," just as I was  
I went forth from among them to the darkness,  
And through it and a heavy rain that fell  
Unfelt upon me, made my way, nor stopped  
Nor even knew where I was going, till  
I found myself at William's mother's house,  
Wet and bewildered, choked with tears, scarce able  
To speak, or give an answer to their questions.  
Oh ! what a different coming home to that  
I had so often pictured to myself !  
I used to think that were I but with William,  
No matter where or how, I must be happy ;  
But now I found that we may buy the things  
That are most precious, at too dear a cost,  
With loss of conscience and the peace of mind  
That goes with it—for I was with him now,  
But not the thought that we were one for ever,  
That I belonged to him, that nothing now  
Could part us, no, not even William's words  
Could ease the aching anguish of my heart ;  
And when he found he could not comfort me,  
He ceased to speak, and held my hand in his,  
Blaming himself in silence ; so we sat  
Together, feeling we had left behind us



The little Eden of our happy thoughts,  
Where we had lived so long, like our first parents  
Cast out by disobedience ; when we heard  
A knock, and George looked in with anxious face  
That brightened when he saw that I was there :  
His was a cheerful honest face, that seemed  
To have a comfort in its very look ;  
Not then alone, but many an aftertime  
Only to see him lightened half our cares,  
And if he found us anxious, still he left us,  
Sometimes we scarce knew why, with happier  
                  hearts ;

His was a hopeful, generous, kindly nature,  
That ever turned things to their brightest side,  
Or made one for them out of its own sunshine ;  
He did not, like my other brothers, rest  
Content with wishing well to us, but left  
No way untried to bring my father round ;  
But all in vain, yet still he cheered us, saying,  
The good time would not fail to come at last ;  
Before he left he brought us all his savings,  
They were no use, he said, to him at sea,  
And all things were a help to new beginners —  
Oh, sir ! you are a Sailor like my brother,  
You have a kind heart, I am sure, like his,  
To listen as you do ; he went away,

---

My brother, my dear brother ! little then  
I thought that I should see his face no more,—  
I stood with him beside the garden gate,  
(The gate where I so oft had talked with William)  
One starlight night, for I had set him home  
To see the last of him—oh ! how I grieved  
To think that I, who used to set his things  
In order for him when he went away  
Like any Mother, dared not now be seen  
Within the house ! and after we had parted,  
I heard him calling after me so kindly,  
(The last, last words I ever heard him speak)  
“ Keep a good heart up till we meet again,  
All will come right, dear sister, in the end.”

*Trav.* And did your brother's parting words  
come true ?

*Mary.* Yes, after many days—but first I suffered  
Much, and in many ways, but most in mind.  
Things did not thrive with us ; I used to grieve  
About my father, thinking I had lost  
Perhaps for ever for myself and William  
The promised blessing ; feeling oft as if  
My Heavenly Parent's love had gone with his ;  
I lost a little girl, the only one  
I ever had ; I surely was not worthy,  
That had myself so sorely failed in duty,

To know the comfort of a daughter's love ;  
Then William's kind, good mother too was taken ;  
In those few first years of my married life,  
Our lot was crossed by poverty and sickness ;  
Yes ! many trials, many cares were mine,  
But never, never one that William caused me ;  
The things we prize the most are oft-times used  
To chasten us—it was not so with me ;  
Heaven was too kind to send my punishment  
Unto me by the hand I loved so well !  
I oft have heard grave people at my father's  
Talk of the sin of loving over-much,  
Forgetting the great Giver in his gift—  
To me it seems we best remember Him  
By prizing, loving all the things He gives  
In Him, the Giver,—loving them the more  
Because *He* gives them ; just as we would wear  
A token from some cherished earthly friend  
Upon our hearts, as if we could not hold  
It there too closely for the giver's sake,  
That gave it not for slighting.

These were times  
Whose very troubles seem to have their dearness  
For the one happiness that ran all through them ;  
But those days passed, and as the proverb tells us,  
The darkest hour of life, as of the day,

---

Is that before the dawning, even so  
It was an evil chance that wrought the change  
That rolled the heavy stone from off my heart.  
My father who was now well up in years,  
Yet never seemed to feel their weight, so strong  
The spirit that was in him, late and early  
Still working with the foremost, in the field  
As they were bringing home the hay, was struck  
By an unruly horse ; the loaded wain  
Passed over him before a soul could help,  
And he was brought back to the farm for dead,  
Senseless and crushed—oh ! what it was for me  
To meet him for the first time thus ! for me  
Who now might stay beside him with the rest,  
(So is there comfort in the saddest things)  
Nor fear to anger him ; I kept my place  
Beside him day and night, and when my sisters  
Sunk, worn and wearied past their strength, in me  
Something there was that could not tire nor rest,  
Which used to make me wonder at myself ;  
There was one thought upon my mind that bore me  
Through all, a wish so like a fear, it trembled,  
Because I dared not turn it to a prayer ;  
I had no right to weary Heaven for favours,  
Too happy if I might but win its pardon ;  
And yet although I asked it not, I trusted

Through goodness giving more than we dare ask,  
My father's soul might come to him again  
Before he died, to bless and to forgive me.

*Trav.* And it was granted you ?

*Mary.* Weeks passed, and then  
My father's mind returned as clear as ever,  
But life was shattered in him, and we saw  
His days would not be many for this world ;  
He spoke unto me kindly, and seemed pleased  
To have me near him (I that always knew  
His ways so well) yet never named the past,  
Or mentioned William, yet still I hoped ;  
For the strong spirit was subdued within him ;  
He lay as weak and helpless as a child.  
And like a child his Father called him home,  
So gently, that I cannot think but God  
Whom he had followed from afar, yet truly,  
Was gracious to his spirit at the last,  
And to his \* evening gave a clearer light  
Than the long earthly day had ever known ;  
I sat by him one summer afternoon  
While he was sleeping—there is truth in Sleep,  
They say the tongue if questioned cannot choose  
But answer truly, even so the face  
In slumber answers truly to the soul ;

\* Zechariah xiv. 7.

---

And upon his was now no trace of hardness,  
No more than on the earth of last year's snow ;  
And even in his half-shut eye a kindness,  
And all about his mouth a look of peace ;  
He slumbered lightly, and I heard the words  
Half murmured, " Whom have I in Heaven but Thee,  
Oh Lord, and on the Earth is none beside Thee ;  
My heart and flesh are failing me, but God  
Is my Soul's portion, and my strength for ever."  
And fearing to awake him, I sat down  
And stirred not from the window-seat that looked  
On the old pleasant garden that I loved ;  
All in the house was quiet, for the rest  
Had gone out to the milking, nothing stirred—  
The old house-cat slept by me in the sunshine,  
And through the open window came the sound,  
The summer sound of bees among the flowers  
With distant voices from the harvest field ;  
I know not how it was, but on my spirit  
There fell a quietness so still and deep,  
A sadness that had such a sweetness in it,  
As I can find no language to express ;  
There are such moments, when the air is full  
Of blessing, moments in our life when Heaven  
Seems nearer to us, and its lofty gates  
Set wider open ; in that Sabbath moment,

All that I loved were with me, William,  
George, and my little girl; I thought of all  
The things that had been, and my soul was filled  
With humble, hopeful, reconciling joy;  
Just then the door was opened, and looked in  
Our good old clergyman, my father's friend:  
He made a sign to me, and by the bed  
Sate silent till my father should awake.  
At last he stirred, and when he saw our friend  
He said "You, Sir, alone? Where are they all?  
And where is Mary? seldom is it she  
Deserts her post," he added, smiling kindly.  
I answered, "Father, I am here;" and then  
Knelt down beside the bed and took his hand,  
And kissed it over and again, and said  
"Oh Father, only *say* that you forgive us!  
For now I know that in your heart you have  
Forgiven us, then only tell us so!  
We feel as if your anger turned away  
God's face from us—Oh, father, then forgive us;  
It is the first time I have asked it of you  
Upon my knees, because you still denied me,  
But I have asked it of my Heavenly Father  
Upon my knees, for years, and something tells me  
That He has not refused me!" Then my father  
Was silent for awhile, but pressed my hand,

---

And to his lip before he spoke there came  
A smile, that was itself a piece of Heaven ;  
He said " Oh, Mary ! rightly art thou named,  
For thou art like thy namesake in the Bible,  
Thou hast loved much ! be therefore unto thee  
The more forgiven, and when thou art, my daughter,  
As near thy end as now I draw to mine,  
Then, may thy Heavenly Father pardon thee  
All things that thou hast done through life to grieve  
him,

As freely as I now forgive and bless thee."  
But at his words I wept—" Oh Father ! William !  
You have not mentioned William's name ! to me  
It is no blessing if he does not share it."  
He smiled and answered, turning to our friend  
"(Said I not well that she was rightly named ?)  
But when I blessed thee, Mary, even in thought  
I did not put asunder those whom God  
Hath joined so close and kindly ; go for William,  
Yes, go for my son William, that my soul  
May bless you both together ere I die :"  
I would have flown to fetch him then, but felt  
A hand upon my arm, that stopped me kindly ;  
It was the good old clergyman—his eyes  
Were wet with tears, and yet he ever loved  
A cheerful word that had instruction in it ;



“ When Mary was a little girl ” he said,  
Turning unto my father, “ at the school  
I taught her all her ten commandments duly,  
And made her say them over and again  
Till I was sure she knew them perfectly.  
But God himself has taught her that Eleventh one,  
Our Blessed Master bade us learn by heart,  
And I am sure she knows it perfectly.”

\* \* \* \* \* Now have you heard  
My story ; it has been  
A long one : rather I have made it so,  
Loving to linger over it, for now  
Those that it tells of only live for me,  
In thoughts by day, and dreams upon my bed ;  
Now there is little more remains to tell.

*Trav.* Except of how you came to leave old  
England,  
And settle in this lone and distant place.

*Mary.* It was through William, Sir, that used  
to think

(Being unlike most other country people,  
Of an enquiring, active turn of mind)  
The New World was more roomy than the Old,  
And fairer prospects open to our children ;  
And both are good, I know, for God made both ;  
And we have prospered well in this, yet still,

---

In part, I missed the things I left behind,  
Although I brought my chiefest treasure with me ;  
At least I missed them when that too was gone,—  
It is now ten years since I buried William ;  
Sometimes, when we were happiest, a gloom  
Would come across me, thinking of the time  
When one of us would have to leave the other ;  
Such thoughts are suited to a life like ours ;—  
What matter ! since there is a world where Love  
Shall fill the soul, and never over-weigh it ;  
In Heaven, Love walks for ever in the sun,  
Yet casts no shadow after him as here.  
When William died, I know not what it was,  
I felt,—a grief that was a thankfulness,  
For being blest with one like him so long ;—  
And I am always cheerful as you see me,  
But since he went, my life has never seemed  
To me what it was then ; my sons are thriving,  
And settled happily ; I now may say,  
Thanks to the goodness that has followed me,  
Through my long life, I have no wish remaining  
As far as this world goes, or only one ;  
And that is if I could but see my brother,  
Or hear some tidings of him ere I die.  
I sometimes think that he is dead, but then  
He does not come with William in my dreams :

He settled in the Indies, where he traded  
And married there, and seemed a prosperous man ;  
Then we had often letters ; later on  
They spoke of change that was not for the better,  
And told us he had lost his wife and child ;  
Now it is years since last we heard of him,  
And how things fare with him I guess in vain,  
But oft I picture him within my mind,  
Now old and failing as I am myself,  
With no one by to comfort him with talk,  
(He that was kind and good to all the world,)  
Of things that were, and better things that will be ;  
And then I think of all that I could do  
To cheer him if I were but near, until  
(It is an old woman's thought) I feel as if  
I but knew where to seek him, I could start  
That moment, and walk on until the shoes  
Wore off my feet, nor stop until I reached him.

*Trav.* And when you met, perhaps you might  
not know him,  
He must be changed.

*Mary.* *He* was not one to change,  
Yet years and troubles may have told upon him.

*Trav.* They must have told a heavy tale indeed,  
Since all this while you have not known me—MARY!  
(*He holds out his arms to her.*)

---

Oh ! my dear sister, I have found it hard  
To make myself awhile thus strange unto you,  
For I came here to seek you ; you are now  
The only one I have, the rest I love  
Are neither in the New World nor the Old,  
But in another, safer far, and happier ;  
Yet I was restless wanting them, and thought  
I will go forth, if yet my sister lives,  
Or William, there is something left for me.  
But, when at first I saw you did not know me,  
A sudden fancy took my mind, to try  
If still the heart you used to have of old  
Kept in its right place through a life-time's changes,  
And kept a place for me,—but now I find  
That *there*, and by the hearth is room enough  
For the old stranger as you thought him ; now  
He will not leave you till you tire of him   \*   \*

## ASPIRATION.

**O**H ! that my songs were sweet !  
Sweet as the voice of bird or breath of rose,  
Then would I lay them at His feet,  
From whom all sweetness flows.

Oh ! that some sudden breeze  
Might sweeping cross my lyre, that once awoke  
The solemn murmurs of the cedar trees,  
Where man with angels spoke !

That once the living coal  
Upon my lips, within my heart might lie,  
Within the secret chambers, where my soul  
Hath stored its imagery.

That once the fire would break  
While I am musing mid the fancies lone  
That I have garnered, and Heaven's Lightning make  
The sacrifice its own !

---

Then would I stoop no more  
Of earthly Love, of earthly Grief to sing,  
That met and mingled in their sighs, of yore  
So oft upon the string;

For as the dew-drops dry  
On the bird's wing, exhaling in its flight,  
So mortal dreams would on my spirit die,  
Nearing the source of light;

And like a flame that glows  
Steadfast before an altar, from the ground  
My soul would soar, and scatter as it rose  
Odours and light around !

Yet since this may not be,  
Since, but before the Temple's Outer Gate,  
And not within its Inner Sanctuary  
I minister and wait ;

Still would I linger fain  
About that Porch, and patient strive to win  
A breath of sweetness for an earthly strain  
From all that flows within !

Still would I strive to bring  
    (E'en of the best I could) my gift, and twine  
Of earthly blossoms, soon awithering,  
    A garland for that shrine ;

Flowers of the field and wood,  
    Fading, and faint, and frail, yet haply there  
Received by Him that made them once so good,  
    And keeps them still so fair !

Pale blossoms, dewy-bright,  
    (For they are Earth's, that speaks through tears  
        her love ;)   
Yet all their leaves unfolding to the light  
    Of sunshine from above !

## CHILDHOOD.

ONCE in a garden bounded  
By many a lofty wall,  
Where quaint old sentinels, in stone,  
Kept watch and ward o'er all,  
But opening southwards, shaded  
By trees that swept the ground,  
And kept the turf unfaded  
And green, the summer round ;  
There was a little lake, and there  
An island, and a boat  
That lay mid shining water-flags  
And lily-leaves afloat ;  
Smooth as the swards around them clipt,  
Swept only by the wing  
Of gauzy dragon-fly, that dipt  
In many a mazy ring,  
Were those still waters ; all unstirred  
The rose's leaf would lie,  
Blown there by summer winds ; the bird  
Skim, lightly glancing by.  
This was the Haunt of childhood ;  
Once there I seemed to grow



---

Among the flowers, and with the fruits  
To change and ripen slow ;  
I watched them through all changes, there  
Upon the grass I lay  
Snowed over by the blossoms light  
That fell so thick in May ;  
I saw the currant strips that hung  
Transparent on the stems,  
They clothed as in the Eastern tale  
With many coloured gems ;  
I watched the peach's sunny cheek  
Turn slowly on the wall,  
And with no guess at Nature's laws  
Saw many an apple fall ;  
Gold-tinted, rosy-tinged, their hues  
Were mine, and I as they ;  
The purple bloom was on my life,  
The down unbrushed away ;  
My world was then like His that first  
A happy garden knew,  
Unworn, and fresh, and glistening bright  
With shining spheres of dew ;  
My soul was full of light that passed  
As through a tintured pane  
In warm and vermeil hues, and cast  
On all its gorgeous stain ;

---

The dial on its grassy mound  
That silent marked the hours,  
(Time's footfall then awoke no sound  
That only trod on flowers)  
The sun-flowers and the moon-flowers  
(These were lilies white and tall)  
The ancient griffins that looked down  
Upon me from the wall ;  
These were for tokens unto me  
And signs, they seemed to pass  
Into my life as then I lay  
At noon-day on the grass,  
And twined a wondrous history  
Slow twisting, branch and stem,  
My garlands, binding all the while  
My Being up with them ;  
And I knew that in the wild-wood  
'Mong the meadows, on the hill  
Were flowers, but unto childhood  
The best were nearest still ;  
And I sometimes thought " out yonder  
I will seek for blossoms too,"  
But turned again the fonder  
To those that round me grew ;  
Still have I flowers around me—  
But some that grow so high

---

I cannot reach unto them,  
And they drop not till they die ;  
Still I have flowers around me—  
But some that lie so low  
I cannot stoop to pluck them,  
They must wither where they grow ;  
Still have I flowers to eye more fair,  
More dear unto the heart  
Than those, but scattered here and there  
They bloom, and far apart ;  
I scarce know where to find them,  
I can never hope again  
Into one knot to bind them,  
As I did so often then.  
Soon told were childhood's treasures—  
The childish world was small,  
But its wonders and its pleasures  
Were its own—it held them ALL !

Once, in a mansion, looking  
Upon that garden fair,  
Was a wide and pleasant parlour,  
And an eastward bedroom ; there  
As on my little bed I lay  
Before my half-shut eyes  
Danced dreams of pleasure, that the morn

Was sure to realize ;  
When the sun knocked at my window,  
And to give him entrance free  
I sprung, because he never came  
Without some gift for me !  
Still night brings visions round my bed  
As sweet but not so true,  
And still the morning comes with gifts,  
But now they are not new ;  
So I cry not now " To-morrow's come,"  
My spirit less elate,  
For all that it may bring to me  
Full patiently can wait.  
My Evening and my Morning then  
Made up one perfect Day  
Of joy, and round the parlour fire  
My winter garden lay ;  
I played beside it till I saw  
The deepening shadows fall,  
And through the twilight come and go  
The pictures on the wall,  
This was the hour for stories  
And wondrous tales, that drew  
My spirit after them to lands  
Where all was strange and new ;  
And I listened, and I wondered,

---

Then hastened to resume  
My journey (broken oft by falls  
That harmed not) round the room ;  
I have now of longer journeys  
O'er rougher roads, to tell,  
And sorer hurts, without the kiss  
That used to make them well !  
This was the Home of childhood ;  
As in a Fairy Ring  
Within the circle of its hearth  
Was drawn each cherished thing ;  
I sent no restless thought beyond,  
I looked not to the door,  
If the whole world had entered there  
It could not give me more  
Than those that sat around it—all  
I knew of good and wise,  
Spoke for me then upon their lips,  
And lived within their eyes ;  
I had no Future then, no Past,  
My life was unto me  
But one bright *Now*—the happiness  
That has no History !  
Still hath my heart a hearth, but now  
Its circle is so wide  
That those it burns for, never meet

---

Around it side by side ;  
They are severed, they are scattered,  
And now the twilight's fall  
Too often only comes to me  
With shadows on the wall ;  
Soon filled was childhood's measure,  
The childish heart was small,  
Yet they that made its treasure  
Were its own—it held them ALL !

Now is that hearth deserted,  
So warm and bright of yore,  
And that pleasant garden—through its paths  
I shall never wander more ;  
It is closed to me as surely  
As if to bar my way,  
The Flaming Sword before its gate  
Was turning night and day ;  
Yet I would not therefore sever  
My spirit from the light,  
But strive to widen ever  
Its circle of delight ;  
For all things from it taken,  
And all it seeks in vain,  
Together prest and shaken  
Shall fill it yet again ;

For each dim and shadowy token,  
Each hint to childhood given,  
Each promise earth hath broken  
Shall yet be kept in Heaven,  
When joy and peace long-parted  
Meet in an endless kiss,  
And perfect Love is joined at last  
To pure and perfect bliss !  
For the great and gracious Giver,  
Till he spread both hands to bless  
The cup that ever floweth o'er,  
And never holdeth less,  
With the blessing without sorrow,  
With the long and perfect Day  
Of light, that hath no morrow  
To take its joy away,  
Lets not the heaped-up measure  
Within the bosom fall ;  
Keeps back his richest treasure  
Until he gives it ALL !

## THE MOWER-MAIDEN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.

“GOOD morning, Bessie ! What ! astir so  
early with the day !  
Love hath not made thee, best of girls, an idler on  
thy way ;  
Well ! mow this meadow in three days, and then I  
may not chuse  
My only son to such a girl still longer to refuse.”

So spoke the wealthy Farmer, as he went his  
morning round,  
With busy, self-important mien ; Ah, Bessie ! at  
the sound  
How throbs that loving heart of thine ! new life,  
new strength it sends  
Through all her limbs—beneath her scythe the  
waving meadow bends.

The mid-day glows, the Mowers now with heat and  
toil opprest,  
Have sought with thirsty lip the well, the cooling  
shade for rest ;



And from the sultry fields awhile, all save the bees  
are gone,  
Yet Bessie rests not, but with them in rivalry  
works on.

The vesper bells have chimed, and fast shuts in the  
evening gray,  
“ Now, well enough,” the neighbours cry, “ good  
Bessie, for to-day.”  
The mowers leave the fields, the herds draw home  
at set of sun,  
But Bessie whets her scythe and works as if she'd  
just begun.

The dew shines soft on earth, in Heaven the moon  
with many a star,  
The hay smells fresh, the nightingale trills loudly  
from afar,  
Yet Bessie feels no wish to pause a listening ear  
to lend,  
She only hears with steady stroke the rustling  
scythe descend.

And so from eve till morn, from morn till eve, as  
at the first

She feeds on love, on happy hope she quenches  
still her thirst,  
The third time rises up the sun, and now are  
Bessie's hands  
At rest, as weeping joyful tears upon the field she  
stands.

“ Good morning, Bessie ! what see I ! oh, active,  
stirring girl !  
And is the meadow really mown ? that shall be  
cared for well ;  
But for my son—in earnest thou didst never take  
my jest ?  
Ah ! fond and simple then it seems must be the  
loving breast ! ”

He speaks and goes upon his way, but Bessie has  
grown pale,  
A deathly chill has struck her heart, her knees  
beneath her fail ;  
Her senses swim, her speech is gone, her consci-  
ousness gives way,  
And there poor Bessie has sunk down upon her  
new-mown hay ;  
And so through stunned and silent years beside the  
bee that yields

For her its honey, Bessie still lives on amid the  
fields,

A life that is not Life—Oh, make, and make it  
quickly there

A grave for her, the Mower-Maid, among the  
meadows fair.

## THE SINGER.

**B**EFORE the loud acclaim that rose  
To greet her as she came,  
She bent with lowly grace that seemed  
Such tribute to disclaim ;  
With arms meek-folded on her breast  
And drooping head, she stood ;  
Then raised a glance that seemed to plead  
For youth and womanhood ;  
A soft, beseeching smile, a look,  
As if all silently  
The kindness to her heart she took,  
And put the homage by.

She stood dejected then, methought,  
A Captive, though a Queen,  
Before the throng—when sudden passed  
A change across her mien ;  
Unto her full, dilating eye,  
Unto her slender hand,  
There came a light of sovereignty,  
A gesture of command :

And to her lip, an eager flow  
Of song, that seemed to bear  
Her soul away on rushing wings  
Unto its native air ;  
Her eye was fixed, her cheek flushed bright  
With power ; she seemed to call  
On spirits duteous to her voice  
At every rise and fall ;  
There was no triumph on her brow,  
No tumult in her breast,  
Her soaring soul had won its home  
And smiled there as at rest ;  
She felt no more those countless eyes  
Upon her ; she had gained  
A region where they troubled not,  
The joy she had attained ;  
Now, now, she spoke her native speech,  
An utterance fraught with spells,  
The echoes of the heart to reach  
Within their slumber-cells :  
And many a quick unbidden sigh,  
And starting tear, revealed  
How surely at her touch the springs  
Of feeling were unsealed ;  
The Present seemed unto the Past  
For one sweet moment bound,

---

With all its broken ties made fast,  
And all its lost ones found ;  
They who were always loved, seemed now  
Yet more than ever dear ;  
Yet closer to the heart they came,  
That always were so near :  
And trembling back unto the lips  
As if they ne'er had changed,  
Old names returned that had been thence  
Long severed, long estranged ;  
For in the strain, like those that fall  
On wanderers as they roam,  
The exiled spirit found once more  
Its country and its home !

She ceased, yet on her parted lips  
A happy smile abode,  
As if the sweetness of her song  
Yet lingered whence it flowed ;  
But for a while—her bosom heaved,  
She was the same no more,  
The light and spirit fled ; she stood  
As she had stood before ;  
Unheard, unheeded to her ear  
The shouts of rapture came,  
A voice had once more power to thrill,

---

That only spoke her name ;  
Unseen, unheeded, at her feet  
Fell many a bright bouquet,  
A single flower, in silence given,  
Was once more sweet than they ;  
For link by link, her own wild strain  
Had drawn her spirit back,  
By windings of a silver chain  
Upon a long-lost track.  
And with her song her heart returned,  
To days for ever gone,  
Ere Woman's gift of Fame was her's  
The Many for the One !

E'en thus, Oh Earth ! before thee still  
Thy Poet-Singers stand,  
And bear the soul upon their songs  
Unto its native land ;  
And even thus, with loud acclaim  
The praise of skill, of art,  
Is dealt to those who only speak  
The language of the heart !  
While they who love and listen best  
Can little guess or know,  
The wounds that from the Singer's breast  
Have let such sweetness flow ;

---

They guess not whence it gushing, starts  
The clear and piercing tone  
That wins its way to other hearts,  
Through anguish of its own !  
They know not Mastery must spring  
From conflict and from strife ;  
These are not only Songs they sing,  
They are the Singer's Life !



'Till Autumn as he flies  
O'er us shakes his torch of fire,  
Quick we flash in gorgeous dyes,  
Kindling on our funeral pyre ;  
Then sings the wailing wind  
Dirges o'er us, as we lie  
Wept upon by droppings kind  
From a sad and constant sky."

Then said those buds " We die  
Not like you in splendour shrined,  
Yet we perish willingly,  
We have left our Fruit behind."  
Word spake they never more ;  
Gentle souls ! e'en thus, methought,  
Ye depart, but not before  
All your quiet task is wrought ;  
Little missed or mourned below,  
Slender record would ye find,  
All your sweetness with you go,  
But for Fruit ye leave behind !

## THE SLEEPING GIRL.

I CAME to waken thee, but Sleep  
Hath breathed about thee such a calm,—  
Hath wrapt thee up in spells so deep  
And soft, I dare not break the charm ;

Thy breathings do not stir the folds  
That lie unmoved around thee ; Rest  
Hath rocked thee gently,—now she holds  
Thy spirit lulled upon her breast ;

An imaged Stillness, by Repose  
Fast locked in an enduring clasp :  
A marble Silence, with the rose  
Just dropping from her languid grasp :

Yet never o'er the sculptured lid  
Did such a blissful slumber creep ;  
Its shade hath ne'er such sweetness hid—  
The statue smiles not in its sleep !

And dost *Thou* smile ? I know not ! Night  
To one serene, abiding grace,  
Hath wrought the quick and changeful light  
That flitted o'er thy waking face :

It is not smiling, it is Peace—  
All lovely things are thine at will ;  
Thy soul hath won a sweet release  
From Earth, yet kept its gladness still !

For Sleep, a partial nurse, though kind  
To all her children, yet hath prest  
Some to her heart more close—we find  
She ever loves the youngest best ;

Because they vex her not with aches  
And fever-pangs to hush to rest ;  
They need no soothing ! She but takes  
Them in her arms, and they are blest !

The double portion there is given ;  
She binds two worlds within her chain ;  
And now by golden light of Heaven  
Thou livest o'er the day again :

---

My touch must bid those bright links start  
And fly asunder ; yet for thee  
I may not mourn—not far apart  
Thy Dream and thy Reality !

Soon shall I watch within thine eyes  
The sweet light startle into morn,  
And see upon thy cheek arise  
The flushing of a rosy dawn :

The sunshine vainly round thee streams,  
And I must rouse thee with a kiss :—  
Oh ! may Life never break thy dreams  
With harsher summoning than this !

## MADANA.

The invisible Madana (or Kama) the Hindu Cupid, is armed with a bow of Sugar-cane strung with bees, and five arrows, each tipped with a flower exercising a peculiar and distinct influence on the heart; among these *one* alone of fatal and unerring flight is headed, and the head covered with honeycomb.

SUMMER! Summer! soft around  
With a hush'd and dream-like sound,  
From a beating heart that knows  
Too much rapture for repose,  
Breathless, tremulous, arise,  
Murmurs; thick mysterious sighs;  
Whispers, faintly wandering by,  
Breathe a warning out and die;  
Lightly o'er the bending grass,  
Changeful gleams and shadows pass;  
Through the leaves a conscious thrill  
Lightly runs, and all is still—  
Like the tree\* whose branch and stem  
Flame with many a sudden gem,  
Blushing in its haste to greet  
Touch of Beauty's slender feet,  
Earth with inner joy opprest,  
Shaken from her central rest,

\* The red A'soka, supposed to blossom when its stem comes in contact with the foot of a beautiful woman.

---

Through her bursting bloom reveals  
Hidden ecstasy she feels :  
Now the rich, unfolding Rose  
Through its crimson splendour glows ;  
Jasmine blossoms manifold  
Shed their stars of paly gold ;  
On the lake's broad bosom borne  
Redd'ning to the redd'ning dawn,  
Flashes many a floating cup  
Raised to drink the sunbeams up ;  
Drooping on the heavy air  
Faint with sweetness that they bear,  
Now the Mango buds grow pale  
O'er their passion-breathing tale ;  
And the Champak's leaves disclose  
Where, amid their vestal snows,  
Kindling at deep gleaming eyes  
Fiery-hearted fragrance lies ;  
Summer ! Summer ! now the air  
Trembles—MADANA is there !  
Watch not for his flitting wing,  
List not for the bounding string,  
Floating 'mid the groves to choose  
Gorgeous blossoms, mingled hues,  
Viewless as the viewless wind,  
Weaving spells for heart and mind,  
Flower-armed, flower-crowned-Deity,

Light his unseen arrows fly !  
Tremble not ! the archer's smile  
Plays but carelessly the while  
Summer lightning o'er the sky  
Flashing, flick'ring restlessly;  
Sporting with the passing hours,  
He hath winged their flight with flowers;  
Gentle witchery and brief,  
He hath breathed o'er bud and leaf;  
That hath lent to glance and tone  
Light and sweetness not their own,  
And, as these shall fade away,  
Will the pleasant charm decay,  
Droop, and leave no trace behind  
Where its clasping tendrils twined,  
Fading, fleeting, like the sigh  
Of some wandering melody ;  
Like a blissful dream that flings  
Light upon the coming day,  
Like a bird whose gorgeous wings  
Glitter as it flits away,  
So they vanish ! yet the heart  
Ere its gentle guests depart  
Links a thought for after hours,  
Summer ! to thy songs and flowers !

Yet beware the hidden power,

---

Madana hath yet his hour :  
These were but the chords that thrill  
Lightly to a master's will,  
Tones, his wand'ring fingers fling  
Breeze-like from the trembling string,  
Ere he call forth all the fire,  
All the passion of the Lyre ;  
Ere he stir through one deep strain  
All the founts of joy and pain,  
One full chord is yet unshaken,  
One wild note hath yet to waken,  
One keen arrow yet to fly—  
Tremble ! Madana is nigh !  
O'er the fatal shaft is thrown  
Sweetness all the archer's own ;  
For his strength in sweetness lies—  
Sweetness, that through gentle eyes  
(E'en in gazing half withdrawn)  
Sheds upon the soul a dawn ;  
Sweetness ling'ring in a word,  
Softly uttered, faintly heard,  
Yet within the heart to dwell,  
Treasured deep in many a cell,  
Long with haunting echoes rife,  
When the sounds have died to life ;  
From that subtle arrow's might,  
Vain is wisdom, vain is flight ;



Vain the charmer's boasted spell,  
Mightier charms than his to quell;  
Groves of sandal and of balm  
Yield no soothing, yield no calm,  
Though their odorous branches shed  
Fragrant tears upon thy head,  
Vainly o'er thine aching brow  
Droops the incense-breathing bough,  
Not the cooling\* Lotus leaf  
Gives to hurt like thine relief;  
To thy throbbing temples prest  
Bound upon thy burning breast;  
Vainly! still through pulse and vein  
Glow the dull unceasing pain;  
Vainly, vainly! still the smart  
Rankles in thy stricken heart.  
Therefore from the earth a sound,  
Hushed, and dream-like, and profound,  
Gathers—warning whispers rise,  
Murmurs, thick, mysterious sighs;  
Therefore all the haunted air  
Trembles—Madana is there!

\* Note 2.

## TO E. M. ON HER BIRTHDAY.

THE thoughts, the names, that to the heart lie  
nearest,

Dwell ever *there*, and find no voice in song ;  
It broods above the wealth it holds the dearest  
In joy, whose fulness words could only wrong.

Yet its deep blessings, fervent and unspoken,  
Are not enough to consecrate the day  
That gave Thee unto me ! Some gentle token  
Must mark it ere it pass upon its way ;

And be a Sign, whereon thine eye may linger  
In after days, and find it pointing yet  
Upon Life's dial, with a silent finger  
To memories too tender for regret !

For there, as Thought its backward course retraces,  
The shadow, more than ten degrees removed,  
Falls now on sunny, now on shady places,  
Yet meets no hour when *Thou* wert not beloved !

We will not chide with Time, dear friend, nor waken  
A sigh for hopes that with him harshly fared ;  
All, all the years upon their wings have taken,  
But dearer, sweeter, makes what they have spared :

Unto the chain that long hath firmly bound us,  
They add some link yet brighter than the last ;  
They leave us ever richer than they found us,  
To reckon o'er the treasure of the Past !

June 23, 1849.

## CROSSING THE FERRY.

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.

I **CROSSED** this Ferry once before,  
Still shines the castle as of yore  
In evening light; as then I hear  
The water rushing o'er the weir :

But not within this boat, as then,  
Two dear companions cross again,—  
A Friend, a Father—one in truth ;  
The other rich in hope and youth.

One wrought on earth in quiet, he  
Departed also silently ;  
The other foremost rushed, to fall  
In storm and struggle first of all.

Thus when my musing fancy strays  
To thoughts of earlier, happier days,  
Must I the dear companions miss  
That Death has snatched away from this !

---

Yet, what so close binds friend to friend  
As soul with kindred soul to blend?  
Those hours that fled like spirits past  
Still link me unto spirits fast!

Then take, oh! boatman, take the fee  
That threefold now I tell to thee  
With willing hand—for Spirits twain  
Have cross'd the stream with me again!

## THE LITTLE GIRL'S LAMENT.

**I**S Heaven a long way off, Mother,  
I watch through all the day,  
To see my Father coming back  
And meet him on the way.

And when the night comes on, I stand  
Where once I used to wait,  
To see him coming from the fields  
And meet him at the gate ;

Then I used to put my hand in his,  
And cared not more to play ;  
But I never meet him coming *now*,  
However long I stay.

And you tell me he's in Heaven, and far  
Far happier than we ;  
And loves us still the same—but how  
Dear Mother, can that be ?

For he never left us for a day  
To market or to fair,  
But the best of all that Father saw,  
He brought for us to share.

He cared for nothing then but us—  
I have heard Father say,  
That coming back made worth his while  
Sometimes to go away ;

He used to say he liked our house  
Far better than the Hall ;  
He would not change it for the best,  
The grandest place of all :

And if where he is now, Mother,  
All is so good and fair,  
He would have come back long ago,  
To take us with him there.

He never would be missed from Heaven :  
I have heard Father say  
How many angels God has there,  
To praise Him night and day ;

---

He never would be missed in Heaven,  
From all that blessed throng;  
And we—oh ! we have missed him here,  
So sadly and so long !

But if he came to fetch us, then  
I would hold his hand so fast,  
I would not let it go again  
Till all the way was past ;

He'd tell me all that he has seen,  
But *I* would never say,  
How dull and lonely we have been,  
Since he went far away.

When you raised me to the bed, Mother,  
And I kissed him on the cheek,  
His cheek was pale and very cold,  
And his voice was low and weak.

And yet I can remember well  
Each word that he spoke then,  
For he said I must be a dear, good girl,  
And we should meet again !



And oh ! but I have tried since then  
To be good through all the day ;  
I have done whatever you bid me, Mother,  
Yet Father stays away !

Is it because God loves him so ?—  
I know that in his love  
He takes the good away from earth,  
To live with him above !

Oh ! that God had not loved him so !  
For then he might have staid,  
And kissed me as he used at nights,  
When by his knee I played ;

Oh ! that he had not been so good,  
So patient, or so kind !  
Oh ! had but we been more like him,  
And not been left behind !

## TIME.

" Oh ! voi che avete gl' intelletti sani  
Mirate la dottrina che s'asconde  
Sotto il velame dei versi strani."

**A** SEA-LIKE river rolled along a plain  
On deep still current, that unto the eye  
Seemed half to sleep, yet ever silently  
Bore onwards to a tideless, shoreless main,  
With flow that rested not ; dark branches flung  
Their solemn shadows o'er that stream, and hung  
Crowning its banks with stillness, for the time  
Was Summer in its full and leafy prime,  
Yet Summer in its silence, not its joy :  
The storm's wild armaments across the sky  
Had swept, and still clung darkly, threat'ningly  
Round the dim, eastern mountains, whence of old  
That river flowed ; each high rock-girdled hold  
Gave back low thunders, and a vaporous shroud  
Enwreathed their purple summits in its fold :  
There had been war in Heaven ! the crash sublime  
Of elemental natures, from whose strife,  
Kindred and yet conflicting, leaps to life,

The fiery dweller in the darken'd cloud ;  
There had been fightings upon Earth ! afar  
Arose, where now the tide of battle spent  
More slowly ebb'd, confused, the noise of war ;  
A clang, a shriek, that mingled with the cry  
Of Captains in their shouting ; agony  
And exultation, hoarsely, sternly blent.

Then saw I One, an armèd man, that stood  
Alone by that swift stream, and wearily  
Unclasped his helm and gazed upon the flood,  
And smote his hands together with a cry ;  
Then mark'd I on his corslet stains of blood  
That welled from some deep wound ; in agony  
He shook and trembled through his mail, while slow  
With difficult breath he murmured " where be they ?  
The medicinal herbs that ever grow  
By these dark waters ? Lo ! from Rise of Day  
On the red plain, the battle-plain of life,  
A fervent-hearted Champion ; for the right  
My arm hath striven—Yea ! within the fight  
It hath been mine to triumph ! Yet I bleed"—  
And from his cheek and brow I saw the light  
Of kindling exultation fade and die,  
Like the cold sudden gleams that o'er the sky  
Of winter flicker, and his lip grew pale

Ere yet the proud word passed. " My hurts are  
deep,

The iron is within my soul, the dart  
Hath cloven with its poison through my mail;  
How may I reach the Sunset isles that lie  
Far Westward, where the murmurs of the Sea  
Rise ever gently, and the gale's low sigh  
Bears, on the whisper of tranquillity,  
Health for the wounded, for the weary, rest ?"  
And that dark river through its waves did seem  
To send one answer, " trust thyself to me,  
I bear thee thither, swiftly, silently :"  
And he looked wearily unto the sky,  
Yet seemed to read no certain meaning there ;  
Then with raised hands, and lips that moved in  
prayer,

He flung himself all arm'd upon the stream :  
And that dark flood rolled onwards, and its wave,  
Its swift and hurrying wave methought was dyed  
With crimson, as its broad unslumbering tide  
Swept all its tributary wealth adown  
To its far bourne, while ever soft and low  
Those waters chode and murmured in their flow ;  
As, like fond lips that in their ministering  
Fasten on some deep wound, they drew the sting  
Of the fierce arrow from that warrior's side,

And with cold, kindly touch that dull'd the pain  
It might not heal, they laved his stricken breast,  
While, floating round him with a chiming strain,  
A measured chant, a nurse's lullaby  
That soothes, with wordless song a child to rest,  
They bore him onwards swiftly, tenderly ;  
Till ere upon the wave the evening sky  
Gleamed red, or ere he marked the solemn glow  
Of Sunset rest upon the isles that lie  
Far West, or heard the Main's unchanging flow  
Break on the stillness of the twilight hour,  
I saw the strong man in the might, the power  
Of strength renewed, arise, and once again  
With calm and steadfast bearing seek the plain  
A fervent Champion.

## THE CARRIER PIGEON.

**S**PEED, speed upon thy way !  
I send thee on a gentle errand,—fly  
And work my bidding ere the parting ray  
Fades from the western sky :

The summer woods are dark,  
And murmur lovingly, yet pause not thou  
That bearest tokens onwards to thine ark  
More sure than leaf or bough !

In sunshine bathe thy breast ;  
Stay not within the swift and glancing rill  
To dip thy wing—for thee a sweeter rest  
Is waiting, onwards still !

Forth from the casement, there  
SHE leans to gaze upon the sky, and now  
The evening light lies golden on her hair,  
Lies warm on cheek and brow ;

She looks unto the West ;

It is for thee she watches—thou wilt be  
Soon by her hand, her gentle hand caresst,  
How softly, tenderly !

Yet first beneath thy wing

It trembles, while she seeks my letter ; well  
She knows, ere yet her light touch frees the string,  
All that it hath to tell.

And yet the heart would hear

The words it loves the best repeated ; fain  
To set them to its music soft, nor fear  
To weary of the strain ;

Like Childhood's ear that drinks

Some oft-told story, some remembered rhyme,  
It knows each word before it comes, yet thinks  
Them sweeter every time ;

It welcomes them before

They cross the threshold, as, with greeting soft,  
One flies to meet a foot-fall at the door,  
That cannot come too oft !

Ah! would that to *her* heart

She chanced but once to press the folded line,  
Then all the warmth to sudden life would start,  
I breathed on it from mine!

The love, the tenderness,

That found in words no kindred language, *there*  
Would seek a fond Interpreter to guess  
All they may ne'er declare!

I do but stay thy flight,

Speed on thy way! the summer heavens are  
wide,

Yet through their broad and untracked fields of light  
Thou wilt not need a guide;

My thoughts before thee fly,

Thou needest but to follow where they lead;  
They have *one* way—Ah! would that with thee, *I*  
Might also follow—speed!



## THE RAILWAY STATION.

NOT well nor wisely some have said "among us  
Once moved a spirit fair, that now hath fled,"  
And deemed, that at the hurrying sounds which  
throng us,  
Its shining wings for sudden flight were spread ;

Not all the turmoil of the Age of Iron  
Can scare that Spirit hence ; like some sweet bird  
That loud harsh voices in its cage environ,  
It sings above them all, and will be heard !

Not for the noise of axes or of hammers,  
Will that sweet bird forsake her chosen nest ;  
Her warblings pierce through all those deafening  
clamours  
But surer to their echoes in the breast.

And not the Past alone, with all its guerdon  
Of twilight sounds and shadows, bids them rise ;  
But soft, above the noontide heat and burden  
Of the stern present, float those melodies ;

---

For not with Baron bold, with Minstrel tender,  
Not with the ringing sound of shield and lance,  
Not with the Field of Gold in all its splendour,  
Died out the generous flame of old Romance :

Still, on a nobler strife than tilt or tourney,  
Rides forth the errant-Knight, with brow elate ;  
Still patient pilgrims take, in hope, their journey ;  
Still meek and cloistered spirits stand and wait :

Still hath the living, moving, world around us,  
Its legends, fair with honour, bright with truth ;  
Still, as in tales that in our childhood bound us,  
Love holds the fond traditions of its youth !

We need not linger o'er the fading traces  
Of lost Divinities ; or seek to hold  
Their serious converse 'mid Earth's green, waste  
places,  
Or by her lonely fountains, as of old :

For, far remote from Nature's fair creations,  
Within the busy mart, the crowded street,  
With sudden, sweet, unlooked-for revelations  
Of a bright Presence we may chance to meet ;

E'en *now*, beside a restless tide's commotion,  
I stand and hear, in broken music swell,  
Above the ebb and flow of Life's great ocean,  
An under-song of greeting and farewell.

For here are Meetings : moments that inherit  
The hopes and wishes, that through months and  
years  
Have held such anxious converse with the spirit,  
That now its joy can only speak in tears ;

And here are Partings : hands that soon must sever,  
Yet clasp the firmer ; heart, that unto heart,  
Was ne'er so closely bound before, nor ever  
So near the other as when now they part ;

And here Time holds his steady pace unbroken,  
For all that crowds within his narrow scope ;  
For all the language, uttered and unspoken,  
That will return when Memory comforts Hope !

One short and hurried moment, and for ever  
Flies, like a dream, its sweetness and its pain ;  
And, for the hearts that love, the hands that sever,  
Who knows what meetings are in store again ?

---

They who are left, unto their homes returning,  
With musing step, trace o'er each by-gone scene;  
And they upon their journey—doth no yearning,  
No backward glance, revert to what hath been?

Yes! for awhile, perchance, a tear-drop starting,  
Dims the bright scenes that greet the eye and  
mind;  
But here—as ever in Life's cup of Parting—  
Theirs is the bitterness who stay behind!

So in Life's sternest, last Farewell, may waken  
A yearning thought, a backward glance be thrown  
By them who leave: but oh! how blest the Taken—  
To those who stay behind when THEY are gone!

## A SONG OF ABSENCE.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Einsam? Einsam? nein, das bin ich nicht!

**L**ONELY? nay! I am not lonely!  
When the Friends that *once* were nearest,  
Distant now, but still the dearest  
Greet me from afar!

Joyful? Nay! I am not joyful!  
Witness many a secret yearning,  
Wistful, tearful, still returning  
Where my treasures are!

Mournful? Nay! I am not mournful!  
When I feel that Memory holds me  
To my dear ones, and enfolds me  
As Love did of yore!

*Hopeful?* Yes! My heart is hopeful!  
When the thought once more to meet them—  
Yet again, my loved ones! greet them—  
Thrills it to its core!

## LADY ALICE'S SHRIFT.

“ I am not prone to weeping, as our sex  
Commonly are—

—But I have that grief lodged here which burns  
Worse than tears drown.” SHAKESPEARE.

COME to me, little Sister, thine arms around  
me twine,

And press upon my fever'd cheek that smooth  
bright cheek of thine ;

And fold my burning hands in thine that are so  
cool and soft,

And kiss me, little sister, kiss me tenderly and oft :

Thy kisses are so close and kind, they seem to dull  
the pain

They know not of—upon my heart they fall like  
summer rain ;

They fall where all is parched and dry—oh ! soft  
and kind are they,

But they cannot draw the arrow forth, or charm its  
hurt away !

I watched thee in thy sleep last night, when thou  
didst rise and say,

“ What of the Revel, Sister ? did ye dance until  
the day ? ”

And clasped thine arms about my neck half con-  
sciously, and then,

E'en with the smile upon thy face, sank back in  
sleep again ;

And stirred no more till thou didst wake all rosy  
with the morn ;

The Morn ! *I* watched it slowly glide and glimmer  
into dawn,

With set and sleepless eyes ; yet, oh ! more happy  
not to know

The sharp return to sense of ill—the wakening to  
woe !

The day is past, I know not how, and it is night  
again ;

I did not think to speak, nor cast the shadow of  
my pain

On that young heart of thine, but love for me hath  
made it wise,

And there is soothing in thy voice, and comfort in  
thine eyes ;

---

And the darkness and the silence for my spirit are  
too strong ;  
My heart, it is a Fear to me, a place where spectres  
throng,  
And whisper it—and doleful things have made their  
dwelling there,  
I dare not sit alone with them, to commune with  
Despair ;

And yet it is a little while, a little while—a day,  
Since it fluttered light within my breast, and trifles  
made it gay.  
I see the mirror where I stood last night, and lin-  
gered there,  
Well pleased to hear thee jest and say, I never  
looked so fair ;

Oh ! what a world of hopes and fears lay hid be-  
neath the smile,  
I heard thee with and spoke not—thought was all  
so sweet the while :  
There is no vanity in Love,—yet fain it would be  
fair,  
It would *be all* things for the loved, and I knew  
He would be there !



He had been absent, silent long, and absence is  
unkind,  
And on the mist that silence draws about the heart  
and mind  
Cold shadows flit, and formless doubts loom dim,  
but these I knew  
Would scatter at his greeting smile, as when the  
sun breaks through;

Thou know'st that picture in the Hall, the lady like  
a Bride,  
So bright and queenly, with her lip of sweetness and  
of pride;  
There is a legend writ beneath—a bleeding heart in  
twain,—  
Yet on her brow a look that tells the story far more  
plain,

Of how, within these halls she trod a measure out,  
nor stayed  
For deathful tidings crowding fast, of love and trust  
betrayed,  
And friends betraying,—still she moved with steady  
step and eye,  
And chid the music for its pause “ sound, like my  
heart, sound high.”

She was a Daughter of our House, her eyes were on  
my soul  
Last night, they followed me, their light was as a  
fiery scroll,  
I read in them "Dance! dance thy youth, thy  
bloom, thy life away,  
Thou never canst be happy more, it is well thou  
shouldst be gay."

Dance, till the flowers fall from thy brow and wither  
on thy breast;  
"Dance, wherefore shouldst *Thou* stay or pause,  
that never more mayst rest?  
Our lot is one.—Dance on, dance on, thou dost but  
end the show  
And close the measure that I trod two hundred  
years ago."

Not so; *she* died,—her spirit passed in that proud  
smile, and I—  
Oh! Sister, there is that in me that cannot rest or  
die;  
The grave is full of quietness—forgetfulness is  
deep,  
And Death is far away from me, as far away as  
Sleep!

I must move on, as then I moved, when on my ear  
fell words  
Light spoken by a stranger tongue, yet were they  
very swords;  
I turned and saw him in the throng, and One was  
by his side,  
(It needed not those words to tell) his fair affianced  
Bride.

Yet I danced on as if I trod on air, my cheek was  
bright,  
And ready smiles came to my lip, and fancies gay  
and light;  
Oh! Pride has martyrdoms whereon no pitying eye  
looks down,  
The thorn without the fadeless Rose, the cross  
without the Crown!

We met; her eyes were raised to mine, I heard her  
whisper then  
"Who is that lovely lady?" what answer came  
again  
I know not: she is young like Thee, and innocent  
and gay,—  
Yet *I* am young; at least it seems I was so yesterday:

And I am fair ; at least I am the same ; there is no  
trace  
Of change in aught that once he thought so lovely  
in my face ;  
There is no change in aught within that made me  
dear before ;  
The same ? Yes ! I am still the same, and therefore  
prized no more.

Yet I *was* prized ; I was beloved ; I was not all  
deceived,  
And something was in very deed of all that I be-  
lieved ;  
There was exchange that hath gone on since times  
that were of old,  
When the trader gives his glittering beads for the  
simple Indian's gold !

And mine was given ; it comes not back ; though  
trampled in the dust,  
It bears the image on it stamped in days of hope  
and trust ;  
The fond, false faith so quickly learnt, the heart  
unlearneth slow,—  
For the soul hath loved Idols, and after them will go,

Yea ! though they turn to its decay ! through all  
the shower of pain  
That falls like fire upon my heart, I seem to hear  
again  
Words whispered softly,—only words,—vain echoes  
from a day,  
That never can return again, yet will not pass away.

All things have end, the night wore on, I wished  
not for its close  
Oh ! for the wretched there is nought so dreadful  
as repose ;  
The dull slow torture of the mind, the fever-pangs  
that fill  
The heavy blank that is not rest : I would be danc-  
ing still !

I was like some poor houseless One, that through a  
splendid town  
With sad and undelighted eye still wanders up and  
down,  
With listless step that nothing seeks, nor cares where  
it may roam,  
Yet must move ever on, because he knows he has  
no Home !

---

There was a crowd about the door ; I saw a child  
that took

His mother by the gown, a child with wan and  
wasted look :

“ That is an angel, (low he spoke) you may know  
her by her hair,

Ask her when she goes back to Heaven to take us  
with her there.”

The mother shook her head, and smiled a care-worn  
smile, and then

Looked from me to her sickly child, and back to  
me again,

With eyes that wandered from my face to scan my  
robe's rich fold,

And rested longest on the furs that wrapt me from  
the cold,

With wistful gaze that measured then by silken  
robe and gem

How far was I from want and woe, from all that  
weighed on them :

Poor Child ! Poor Mother ! then I thought, if envy  
be your sin,

Soon would your spirits be assoiled, could ye but  
look within !

## PART II.

“ Only the firmest and most constant hearts  
God sets to act the stoutest, hardest parts.”  
*Old Play.*

SOFTLY she turned to her sister fair,  
Fondly she kissed her on brow and cheek,  
Silent, as on her spirit there  
Struggled a thought that she could not speak ;  
Only she looked on a Rose, and said  
“ Soon was the flower of its bloom bereft,  
Yet cast it not, fading, away for dead,  
Still in its leaves may be sweetness left ! ”

Softly she spake with herself alone,  
“ Courage, my heart, and fail not yet,  
Strive ! for not yet is the Day thine own,  
Thou hast forgiven, thou must forget !  
Ere thou hadst found thee a star to guide,  
Dark were the seas that were thine to cross,  
Strongly against thee set in the tide :  
Now thou art safe, yet hast suffered loss !

---

“ Sore hath the battle against thee gone,  
Keen were the arrows within thee set  
Ere thou hadst girded thine armour on,  
And oft will the archers vex thee yet ;  
Ere thou hadst found thee a shelter, stern  
Gathered the storm o'er thy pathway ; long  
After the rain will the clouds return,  
And thou must onwards, so yet be strong.”

Softly she prayed with herself alone,  
“ Father ! forgive me, that with my lot  
Wrestling in darkness, I strove with THEE,  
Blindly and vainly, and knew it not !  
Yet have my words against Thee been strong ;  
Now will I humble my soul to dust,  
Lord ! unto THEE have I done this wrong,  
Not that I grieved o'er a broken trust—

“ Had I not grieved, I had never loved ;  
(Sore may we weep and yet not repine)  
But that I looked upon woe unmoved,  
Saying ‘ there never was grief like mine :’  
But that I turned with a mind estranged  
From all that thou gavest me yet to hold,  
When once I had seen it grow dim and changed,  
The Love that I stored in my heart for gold :



“ Yet Thou wilt pardon ; with 'Thee above  
Still is there mercy, that fails below ;  
Thou that didst give to the heart its Love,  
Thou that dost send to the heart its Woe,  
Knowest alone what it hath to bear,  
Wilful and weak,—and Thou waitest long  
Till it return from its wild despair,  
And \*Thou art patient, for Thou art strong.”

Not like the Dweller that day and night  
Wounding himself among tombs, made moan  
Over the grave of a lost delight,  
Yet had her spirit a chamber lone ;  
Where, like the Ruler of old, that kept  
Till he might reach it, a steadfast mien,  
Oft she withdrew for a while, and wept ;  
Leaving it still with a brow serene.

\* Note 3.

## A SONG OF REST.

“ Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at Peace.

JOB xxii. 21.

**A** SOLEMN World—no cloud is on the sky,  
Intense and blue, unstirred by any breath,  
Heaven seems to stoop and listen silently  
To hold a voiceless communing with Death :  
This is the place where God hath given Sleep  
To his Beloved Ones; long grasses wave  
Above them, and through branches woven deep  
A quiet sunbeam glides across the grave ;  
Here it is good for Thee awhile to be  
Oh, restless heart ! where nothing stirs or moves,  
Where nothing is disquieted like Thee,  
Where nothing sorrows and where nothing loves ;  
Here it is good for Thee to be, though now  
Where all is peace, Thou come but as a Guest,  
Soon Thou wilt be a Dweller ! Wait and Thou  
Shalt also rest !

Here God hath given his Beloved Sleep ;

It is dark night within, and all the bed  
Is folded smooth by Him that made it; deep,  
And curtained close about the feet and head;  
There is no rise or falling of the breast,  
The Earth lies light upon them, and the sod  
Heaves not; the heart for evermore hath rest  
When once its beatings have been stilled by God;  
For they that talked with it have taken flight,  
There are no busy voices underground,  
When Thought and Memory have said "good night"  
And passed, in fear to break a sleep so sound;  
Yet they whom slumber wraps so sweetly now,  
Were wont erewhile a troubled watch to keep,  
And slept perchance for sadness; Wait and Thou  
Shalt also Sleep!

And here the sleep that God hath given is sweet;  
So sweet, that they are covetous of rest  
That slumber here, and when the parted meet  
They speak not, even they that loved the best;  
For they have rest from *all*, and Love had grown  
Too dear for quietness, so now they sleep  
Until the hour when God shall give His Own  
Beloved Ones a rest more full and deep;  
While from the ground a voice unto me cries

---

“ Here God hath given sleep ;” an answer clear  
Falls from the solemn, bright, attesting skies,

“ He giveth Rest and Love together HERE ;”  
Sleep is not Rest—Yet softly on it now  
The shadow of a Rest beyond it lies,  
And lengthens ever ; Wait, my Soul, and Thou  
Shalt also rise !

## THE ILLUMINATED CITY.

SUGGESTED BY A NIGHT PICTURE OF VENICE.

LIKE some proud Sea-Bird, cast  
In sleep on Ocean's breast ;  
The City sinks at last  
In calm, majestic rest.

Her temples and her towers,  
In floating splendour show,  
Like wave-spread water-flowers,  
Deep rooted far below ;

And broad and fair the while  
She sleeps, a softer Day  
Streams round her with the smile  
That glorifies decay,

And falls in veils of light  
About her, as she seems  
To lie in slumbers bright,  
And broken by sweet dreams.

---

For now with sudden flash,  
Swift meteors start to life;  
And mingling with the dash  
Of waves in softest strife,

A quick and hurrying sound  
Floats down the watery street,  
The Ghittern's chords rebound—  
The dancers' flying feet—

A broad and crimson stain  
Lies on the waters, flung  
Through many a gleaming pane,  
With gorgeous draperies hung ;

And o'er the level tide,  
Like flick'ring Marsh-lights now  
The dark Gondolas glide,  
Bright lamps at every prow ;

Each temple wears a crown,  
A glittering crest of fire,  
As if the stars came down  
To rest on dome and spire :

Once more the City seems  
Adorned to wed the Deep,  
Queen of a World of Dreams  
The radiant Bride of Sleep !

And like a quiet eye  
That keeps a watch of love,  
The Moon looks silently  
Upon her from above ;

With lights beneath that rise,  
And glitter and expire,  
Unmingling—through the skies  
She bears her vestal fire.

No part hast Thou among  
The festal glare of mirth,  
Thou Watcher that so long  
Hast kept the track of Earth !

Since first its shadow swept  
Betwixt thee and thy sun,  
Thy smile the trace hath kept  
Of what it looks upon ;

---

Of tears that fell of yore,  
That fall beneath thy ray,  
Till One for evermore,  
Shall wipe them all away ;

Of Cares that will not sleep ;  
Of pangs that will not cease  
Until a spell more deep,  
Shall soothe them all to peace.

Thy Lamp that on the waves  
Sheds now so soft a ray,  
Lights mourners to the graves  
Of joys long past away ;

To Vigils of regret,  
No eye but thine may see ;  
To sterner Vigils yet,  
When Conscience wakes with Thee !

So, on the lights that rise,  
Upon the lights that die,  
Thou gazest from the skies  
With sad, unchanging eye :



Thy equal splendours fall  
Upon Earth's troubled breast,  
As fain to fling o'er all  
The mantle of Heaven's rest.

Thus Spirits blest, set free  
From all our fevered lot,  
May follow it like Thee,  
May watch, yet mingle not !

May shed upon our way,  
Through all the clouds between,  
A soft and guiding ray  
From Angel-eyes unseen ;

May look upon our Earth,  
As Thou dost watch above,  
Look on our sadness, on our mirth,  
In Pity and in Love !

## A VISION OF GREEN LEAVES.

**T**HE time was Winter, Winter or the Spring  
 That comes with tardy footstep, lingering  
 Like some reluctant Giver, yielding cold,  
 The boons that it no longer may withhold ;  
 And ere I slept, I listened to the rain  
 Dashed by the fitful wind against the pane,  
 The wind, that even through my sleep did seem  
 To break upon the music of my dream,  
 With pause of change and dreariness, and still  
 Swelled, sighed, and moaned each varying scene to fill  
 With trouble and unrest ; at length outworn  
 I slept within my sleep, and to the Morn  
 (Still in my dream) awoke, with vacant eye  
 Forth from the casement gazing listlessly,  
 When sudden I exclaimed " a miracle !  
 A Summer come at once, without a Spring  
 To herald it ! a bright awakening  
 To life and loveliness," for all around  
 Were leaves, green bursting leaves, and on the ground  
 Was short grass springing thick, and through the  
 wave

The dark flag cut its swift way like a glaive ;

And broad as Orient growths, upon the pool,  
Large, juicy leaves lay mantling, smooth and cool :  
I saw no flowers, no fruit, but everywhere  
Leaves, only leaves, that filled the summer air  
With murmurs, soft as whispers that the heart  
Hath longed and listened for ; while light and low,  
As chidings fall from lips that turn their flow  
To gentleness, quick rustlings waved apart  
The boughs, and fragrance soothed the sense like  
thought

Too sweet for utterance ; e'en then I caught  
The Dream's full import : " 'tis the Spring's warm  
sigh "

Methought, " that calls forth all this luxury  
Of leaf and greenness ; thus, upon the heart  
A word, a look will bid a Summer start,  
A Summer come at once, without a Spring  
To herald it, a sudden wakening ; "  
Then from the bands of sleep my spirit broke,  
And with the sweetness on my soul I woke,  
And it was Winter still ! but in my heart  
Was Summer ! Summer that would not depart,  
But breathed across its silence, low and light,  
Like those sweet forest-rustlings of the night ;  
It was a dream of Hope ! and sent by Her  
My Lady bright, because I minister

---

Unto her honour, while I strive to sing  
And praise her with my Lyre's most silver string ;  
It was a dream of Hope ; I know the hue  
Of her fresh mantle, and her symbol true,  
The leaf ! she cannot give the flower or fruit,  
But sends their promise by a herald mute ;  
The leaf, that comes like one in haste to bring  
The first of all some gladsome welcoming,  
And cannot speak for joy, but with the hand  
Still points and beckons to the coming band ;  
I know the symbol, and I bind the sign  
Upon my heart to make it doubly thine,  
Thou Bringer of sweet dreams by day and night,  
Still will I sing and praise Thee, Lady bright !  
And I will gather of these leaves, to twine  
A chaplet for those sunny brows of thine ;  
And by thy smiling Thou wilt keep its sheen,  
In Winter as in Summer fresh and green !

February 17th, \* \* \*.

## THE PARTING.

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.

**F**LING open your lattices, Maidens ! a throng  
Is passing your windows with shouting and song ;  
The Youth from his Home is departing, and they  
His comrades are bidding him speed on his way.

Hark ! loudly they cheer him, and fling in the air  
Their caps bound with ribbons and garlanded fair ;  
Yet he wears no garland, nor joins in the song,  
But walks silent and pale in the midst of the throng.

They clink the full brimmers, the wine mantles high ;  
“ Drink freely, drink deeply, dear Brother ” they cry ;  
“ With the cup drained at parting will *that* pass away  
Which has fevered my bosom for many a day ! ”

Now before the last house in the street stops the  
train,  
And a Maiden peeps timidly forth at the pane,  
And fast fall her tears, but she hides them there,  
Behind wreaths of the woodbine and roses fair.

---

And before the last house, ere they pass by the place,  
The Youth lifts his eyes for a moment's space,  
But he casts them down with a look of pain,  
Nor raises his glance from the earth again ;

“ And hast Thou no flowers for thy garland yet  
found ?

When so many, dear Brother, above and around,  
Are blushing and beck'ning ;—Ha ! Maiden, let fall  
Some flowers for his chaplet, Thou fairest of all ! ”

“ What have I with a garland, dear Brothers, to do ?  
That have no kind Maiden to love me, like you ;  
In the heat of the Sun would its leaves decay,  
The wind as it passed would blow them away.”

And further, and further with shouting and song,  
They pass, and the Maiden looks after them long ;  
“ Alas ! He is going, the youth that I  
Have loved so long and so silently ; ”

“ And here I must stay with this love of mine,  
Where wreaths of the woodbine and roses twine,  
But He, unto whom I'd have given each one,  
And oh, how willingly ! He is gone ! ”

## AUTUMN FLOWERS.

The Seasons alter, hoary-headed frosts  
Fall on the fresh lap of the crimson Rose.

• • • • •  
Not yet on Summer's death, nor on the birth  
Of trembling Winter. SHAKESPEARE.

**Y**E are the Sun's last favours, gorgeous flowers!  
How, like a Kingly spirit in decline  
He scatters gifts around him royally,  
And stretches forth the hand to make a Sign  
Of Blessing, summoning up his fainting powers;  
Ye stand like joyous Revellers, flushed with wine,  
Prest by the swift feet of the glowing hours  
From the Year's heaped up Vintage, full and free,  
Bright with all hues of crowning luxury.

The Rose died long ago; her parting sigh  
Was sweetness, as her living breath had been;  
And as she passed, up-rising, silently  
They hasted after her that was their Queen,  
A Virgin train to bear her company;  
But some had gone before; the Violets muffled  
Their fainting heads among the grass, and sped

---

Unmourned, save by the West Wind's sigh that  
    ruffled  
Through all their leaves, in search of fragrance fled;  
And from the field and wild-wood, with the Spring  
Fair flowrets faded, one by one, serene  
Their meek eyes closing, in their perishing,  
Like gentle Lives that leave around their place  
The quiet sadness of a vanished grace,  
To mark the spot where loveliness hath been;  
E'en so they passed, until the fragrant Queen  
That rears her sceptre 'mid the Meadows, saw  
She had no Vassals left to wield it o'er,  
And paled her foamy wreaths, drooping for evermore.

Ye have not mourned your Sisters, gorgeous  
    flowers!

No part have ye in tears—that ne'er were prest  
To aching hearts, for linking some bright hour's  
Fled sweetness with your own, unto the breast;  
Ye are but prized for beauties seen and known,  
And ne'er were treasured in your fading, kept  
A record of lost Love—when hope hath grown  
As sere as your dead leaflets, oft o'erwept  
By dews that freshen not—for in your dyes  
There lives no language that to Memory's call  
May breathe an answer, and your starry eyes



---

Shine on, but speak not,—Ye are silent all,  
When meaner flowers have told us histories ;  
Broad Dahlias, Fuchsias with your pendent bells,  
Ye may have store of tender chronicles  
And olden, sweet traditions linked with you,  
In those far distant regions, where with dew  
And sunlight of an equal summer nurst,  
Ye took such sudden splendour at the first ;  
But unto us your looks and names are strange :  
And so the Lover passes you—the Child  
Seeks not to twine you in his garland wild,  
Because ye are not ours ! Ye do not lie  
Familiar in our pathways silently,  
To breathe where we have suffered, toiled, and  
                  striven,  
Hints of the long-lost home, the promised Heaven !  
Unloved, unsung, ye bloom and so depart,  
Fair to the eye, not dear unto the heart !

Yet are ye welcome, gorgeous flowers ! too much  
We shed o'er all the spirit's colourings,  
And with our inner Being blend the things  
That have deep morals of their own—a touch  
Of fire hath passed upon you, and your dyes  
Are those that gild the waning woods, and tell  
In the red flashing of Autumnal skies,

---

Of Change that glorifies;—ye grace Farewell  
Until it seems a solemn festival  
At Parting, as ye follow, closing up  
With tributary wealth the Year's bright spoil  
And crown Earth's revel, as ye wreath the cup,  
Filled high and flowing o'er with wine and oil!

## THE GOSSAMER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.

**W**E walked within the fields, and fast  
Flew by, light spun by Fairies' hand,  
A shining thread that as we past  
Between us linked a fragile band;  
I took it for a Sign! in scorn  
Love holds not such slight omens, they  
Are like its own fond hopings, born  
Of vapour, breathed by air away!

## THE BRIDE'S WREATH.

PRESENTED BY A CHILD. (FROM THE GERMAN  
OF MAHLMAN.)

**T**O bind the rich twine of thy waving hair  
Innocence brings thee a chaplet fair,  
Where the leaf of the myrtle darkly glows  
Through buds of the white and the crimson rose ;  
Take the bright garland, young Bride ! from me,  
Thus Love should be crowned by Purity !

With Summer the bud of the Rose will fall,  
But the leaf of the Myrtle is green through all ;  
We liken thee, Rose ! to Life's changeful show,  
To its joys that come light, and light depart ;  
Sweet Myrtle ! we liken thy steadfast glow  
To the Love of the faithful, unchanging heart !

## THE EMIGRANT'S DAUGHTER.

**W**E were but children when our parents came  
From England o'er the broad Atlantic's foam;  
And unto us all countries were the same,  
And where they smiled upon us, *there* was home!

The World was unto us a play-ground wide,  
Where fresh and sparkling lay the morning dew;  
T'were sweet to range among its paths untried,  
When they that loved us wandered with us too;

All there was new, and beautiful, and strange,—  
We thought; and lightly on our feelings lay  
The grief of parting, or the sense of change,  
From scenes where we had sojourn'd but a day.

But she, our elder sister, keenly felt  
Things that our childish spirits bore unmoved;  
And mourned the Home where she had longer dwelt,  
The friends that she had longer, dearer loved:

And like the plant of which old legends tell,  
Around the mother-soil she called her own  
The fibres of her heart had twined so well,  
They might not quit their hold without a groan.

Yet what she suffer'd then she strove to hide ;  
And when we left our home, she did not speak,  
But turn'd so pale, it seem'd the Rose that died  
Knew it would bloom no more upon her cheek :

And on the scenes that we must leave behind  
She turn'd the fix'd and earnest gaze, that fain  
Would grave for ever on the heart and mind  
All that may never meet the eyes again.

Our parents sobb'd aloud : their hearts were stirr'd  
As fast around us flock'd a well-known band,  
To give the parting wish, the parting word,  
To take the last kind pressure of the hand ;

Old friends, old neighbours ! in that hour we found  
Those we had loved but little, with the rest  
Gain a strange value, —ever linked and bound  
Unto the heart with all it loved the best !

Each shade of doubt and coldness, that perchance  
     Had gather'd mid our Being's daily strife,  
 Fell from the soul for ever with the glance  
     That looked Farewell, and knew it was for Life !

Our sister's young companions round her came ;  
     She spoke not, wept not, till a sudden cry  
 Burst from her lips that vainly strove to frame  
     Their trembling utt'rance to the word " Good  
         bye ! "

Her thoughts had wandered, but the trance of pain,  
     It seemed the anguish of that moment broke ;  
 And to their kisses and their tears, again  
     Her soul, with all its tenderness, awoke :

Her spirit in that pang had overpast  
     The bitterness of Death—it found relief ;  
 And all the look that on her Friends she cast,  
     Was love, deep love, that left no place for grief ;

She turned unto them—in her smile serene,  
     The shadow of the Past reflected lay :  
 " Oh ! sometimes think how happy we have been ;  
     Forget me not, dear Friends, when far away ! "

“ Farewell, dear Ellen ! we shall meet again,  
And love you in a happier world than this ! ”—  
She prest them to her heart, and raising then  
Her eyes to Heaven, made softly answer “ Yes ! ”

## PART II.

THROUGH the dark shadows from the pine-boughs  
cast,

Rich flitting sun-gleams streaked the forest road,  
As in a summer's golden eve, at last,  
Our way-worn steps drew near our new abode ;

We saw before us a Savannah lie ;  
A calm lake glittered near, with trees girt round,  
That stood like giants of a world gone by ;  
With smooth, unruffled depths of verdure crowned.

A silent picture, framed and set, it seemed,  
Within the mighty woods, that folding, swept  
In slumbrous masses round,—as they had dreamed  
A vision of deep Quiet while they slept !

Young wearied birds were we that longed to fold  
Our light elastic wings, and sink to rest ;  
As we had done in times that were of old,  
Within the shelter of the household nest :



And there it lay! dropt on us from the skies,  
 We thought, and like a happy island cast  
 Within that forest-sea: in glad surprise  
 We clapped our hands, and shouted, " Home at  
 last ! "

" Home ? "—To our mother's quivering lip the word  
 Arose half consciously, as if her heart  
 Gave back the echo of the sounds she heard,  
 But in their gladness bore not any part :

She gazed around with looks that vainly sought  
 Some likeness with the scenes they loved the best ;  
 And she too seemed, but with a sadder thought,  
 To long to fold her wings and be at rest !

A Stranger, in a land where all was strange,  
 She felt : our father's cheerful eyes were wet,  
 As then he whispered, " Wait till once the change  
 Is past, and Home it will be to us yet ! "

And so it was : a cold and sadd'ning smile  
 The fairest scenes will wear, and all looks lone,  
 Until the busy mind hath wrought awhile,  
 And peopled them with Beings of its own ;

At first the very stillness of the place  
Weighed on our spirits ; yet as days passed o'er,  
We saw at last the old, the real face,  
Of Home look on us fairer than before.

Not that the living wall that fenced us round  
Was charmed to shut out Care : the world was  
new  
That lay without us ; new, we quickly found,  
The inner, anxious world of trouble too !

And yet a spell to soften and to soothe,  
Wrought surely there with silent unseen power ;  
The love that makes life's roughest places smooth,—  
The light that gilds its darkest, dreariest hour—

For Love was in our dwelling when of yore,  
All other joys were there ; yet oh ! its light,  
So pure, so stedfast, had not burned before  
As *now* it did, when nothing else was bright.

The chain that bound our kindred hearts was drawn  
Around them with a firmer, closer hold :  
We knew the links that had the trial borne,  
And stood the test, could only be of gold !

Nay, *then* we knew it not ; we only felt,  
 And did not reason, or take heed for aught ;  
 As in the sunshine of the heart we dwelt,  
 Like the Field-Lilies,—far too blest for thought !

### PART III.

EACH dawn awoke to toil ; yet, ere it past,  
 Would bring a strength to wrestle with the day,  
 And hold, in cheerful faith, its Angel fast,  
 To bid him bless us ere he winged his way.

All wrought together on the onward track,  
 And yet perchance the saddest spirit there,  
 The heart that turned with fondest lingering back,  
 Was first to cheat all others of their care ;

And she, our sister, that in earlier days  
 Had leant on others ; now, with gentle fold,  
 Like the wild plants among our woodland ways,  
 Would cling and twine as then, and yet uphold !

Her step, her hand, brought comfort, yet became  
 So still and quiet, that we only guessed  
 Sometimes that Ellen went, and Ellen came,  
 Because around us all was peace and rest ;

---

Her smile was ever on us ; but the bright  
Swift sunny sparkle from her glance had flown ;  
Or softened, till it seemed its gentle light  
Beamed for us now in tenderness alone :

Her words and tones were cheerful, as of yore ;  
Yet was she changed at heart ; and many a thing  
That would have grieved or gladdened her before,  
Seemed neither joy nor sadness now to bring.

She was not changed *to us* ! and then it lay  
Beyond the compass of our childish powers  
To see that something from her life away  
Had passed, and now she only lived in ours !

But even then had one among us found  
A secret by the others all unguessed ;  
And unto me, perchance, through love that bound  
And folded all my heart within her breast ;

Or that, perchance, it soothed her to express  
Her thoughts to one so guileless and unproved ;  
There might be comfort in the tenderness  
That did not understand, and only loved !

But oft to me her gentle spirit broke  
 The bands of silence that had round it grown,  
 And she would bear me with her as she spoke  
 Unto the world wherein she walked alone.

I was the youngest.—When unto the woods  
 We went at eve, beneath our sister's care,  
 To play, and wake their lonely solitudes  
 With echoes wilder than the wildest there;

And while the rest ran eager all about,  
 To search for wild wood-strawberries, or twine  
 With many a joyous call and merry shout,  
 Bright trailing garlands of the Indian vine;

While, fast and free, they rambled far and wide,  
 Upon a fallen trunk, with moss o'ergrown,  
 I used to sit for hours by Ellen's side,  
 Or on her knee, contented and alone;

Or on the lake, with golden lilies bright,  
 We loved sometimes to steer our little boat  
 Right in among their broad green leaves, and light  
 Rock there with them upon the wave afloat;

And while the sunlight from the glowing west  
Streamed on the lake, and touched each solemn  
tree

With light so calm, it seemed a World of Rest,  
Wherein no beings lived and moved but we ;

Then I would hold her by the hand, and say,  
“ No fairy stories, sister, now ; but tell  
To me of those that live so far away,  
Where once we lived, and whom you love so well.”

And she would kiss me then, and softly smile,  
As to her lips familiar names, and dear,  
Rose like remembered music ; she the while  
As pleased to tell as I could be to hear.

Yet once she seemed to linger, as her tale  
Recalled a name I oft had heard of yore ;  
And her voice faltered,—then her cheek grew pale,  
And her lip quivered, and she spoke no more ;

But as I looked up sudden in her face,  
I felt upon my own a warm tear fall ;  
And saw, that to some distant time and place  
Her thoughts had borne her, far from me—from all:

And I was troubled through my childish heart;  
And said, "Oh, sister! You that love them so,  
Do you not love us too? You would not part  
With us for them, and back to England go!"

She answered slow (as still upon the track  
Of thought she mused), and kissed away my tear,  
"Why should I wish, my darling, to go back,  
When those I love the best are with me here?"

"And yet not *all*," she added, in a tone  
So low, I made no answer. I could see,  
Child as I was, she thought herself alone,  
And spoke unto her heart, and not to me!

#### PART IV.

So time wore on and with us all went well,  
And oft our father looked around, and smiled  
To see how things were changed, well pleased to tell  
Of future conquests from the Forest-wild.

Once to our mother, as they watched the gold  
Of the rich virgin-harvest waving fair,  
"This country would be better than the old,"  
He said, "were Ellen's smile what it was there."

And she awhile was silent, yet at length,  
As with a hasty effort, answered then,  
“ It is the changeful autumn tries her strength,  
She will be well when spring comes back again.”

“ It is the fading, changing leaves that make  
The air so heavy in their lingering fall.”  
Oh ! would, I thought, some sudden wind would  
shake  
Them down at once, if this indeed were all !

For not the leaves that made a path of gold  
For all our forest walks, upon the bough  
Hung loosened from the yellow stalk with hold  
More slight, than unto life seemed Ellen's now :

And all her fading cheek was flushed with light  
Most like the changing Maple's crimsoned hue,  
And now her soft eye glittered large and bright,  
And clear as if her very soul looked through,

To send from thence a message, overfraught  
With all that such fond farewell looks express  
Of Love, that knowing that its time is short,  
Would crowd therein a life of tenderness !



I saw her change, and yet the thought to part  
     With one so dear upon me never fell,  
 I stored in childlike faith within my heart  
     The words " When Spring comes back she will  
         be well."

It was the Indian summer then, whose smile  
     Steals on the earth, a gentle after-thought,  
 As if the Spirit of Decay awhile  
     Would brood above the splendours it has wrought:

We walked at eve ; the air was soft as spring  
     And all the woods around transfigured lay  
 In light and glory, as some angel's wing  
     Had touched them, passing swift upon his way :

And Ellen said, as on her cheek the air  
     Blew mild, " This is the Spring's own sweetness ;"  
         then

I answered, " Oh, dear sister, would it were !  
     For when Spring comes you will be well again."

She looked at me awhile, then answered slow  
     " When Spring comes back, my dearest, who can  
         tell

How it may be ? but this indeed we know,  
     That all is as God wills, and *that* is well."

I fixed my eyes upon her silently,  
And then a flash of light upon me broke,  
And Death was in my soul ; a sudden sea  
Of bitterness o'erswept it, as she spoke,

And strove to comfort me, for well she knew  
My grief was great ; and in the unshed tears  
Of that one moment, Love and Anguish threw  
Upon my heart the weight of many years ;

And, like a mist upon my spirit, then  
A heavy sense of cold and darkness fell ;  
I heard her whisper, " We shall meet again,  
When none are parted, none are loved too well."

As if I feared to lose her then, I clung  
More closely to her side, and all the way  
Upon my lips I framed one word that hung  
Unspoken, with my soul upon it, " Stay."

So we walked on in silence, till we came  
Unto our home, that never slept more fair  
In evening light : " Yes ! it will *look* the same,"  
I thought, " when Ellen is no longer there ;"

And as we reached the house I grew more sad,  
     As then the sound of laughter on us fell ;  
 And as we entered, every face was glad,  
     As with some secret that they might not tell

Except in smiles. " You have been long away,"  
     Our mother said : " A stranger has been here,  
 With news from home." A sudden voice said, " Nay,  
     No stranger ! Call him by some name more dear !"

And there among us, hid from view before,  
     A Youth sprung forth, whose kindling brow and  
         cheek  
 Were flushed and radiant with a greeting, more  
     Than look, or smile, or word, could ever speak :

But Ellen dared not trust her joy ; o'erwrought,  
     Bewildered, half-believing, she did seem  
 Like one who wakens to a blissful thought,  
     So sweet, that even then he fears to dream.

Our father spoke : " Come, Ellen, here is one  
     Who seeks a home, and needs a welcome kind,  
 Because he found his own, when we were gone,  
     So strange and dull, he could not stay behind."

---

The gentle light came back to Ellen's eyes,  
And to her cheek. "And is it even thus?"  
She said; "and have you left all other ties—  
And have you, William, given up all for us?"

And he made answer softly, "Yes, for you!"  
And whispered, as he held her by the hand,  
Some words whose sound it seemed to me I knew,  
But could not then their import understand,

Of One in hopes a goodly gem to find,  
That cast all else away for that alone;  
Nor e'er would turn a lingering look behind,  
If he might call that priceless Pearl his own!

And Ellen spoke not for a while; then flung  
Her arms about our mother's neck, and fast  
Her sweet tears fell, as fondly there she clung,  
And sobbed, "O mother, this is Home at last!"

## HOPE AND MEMORY.

**T**WO spirit-voices sighed upon the air,  
“ Oh, love us ! part us never ! we are fair  
Only together ! fondly would we fling  
Our clasping arms about thee still, and cling  
Like gentle parasites, that round thy lot  
Entwine their mingling blooms—then part us not !

“ For we are patient slaves, twin-born, our fate  
Is still upon thy steps to watch and wait,  
And o’er thy path to hover ! drear would be  
Its course, but for the chequered tracery  
Our light wings weave, as o’er thy changeful way  
With shade and sunshine tremulous they play ;

“ One flits before, yet turning to thee oft  
With gay and beck’ning gesture, whispers soft  
Of many a goodly, many a glorious thing  
She sees far onwards. One, slow-following,  
With sad and patient smile, unto her breast  
Gathers the flowers thy hasty foot hath prest,

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“ And warms them there, until each flower receives  
A soul, a spirit through its withered leaves  
To breathe undyingly around thy heart  
A silent fragrance—scattered far apart  
Its treasures lie, until the loved, the fair,  
The lost, are bound in one pale garland there !

“ We are thy guides ; companions through the day,  
By night though sleep forsake thee we will stay ;  
Thou shalt not miss her with her dreams, for we  
Will sit and tell thee many a history,  
And sing thee songs of soothing :” then alone,  
Arose, methought, the voice of sadder tone.

“ Oh, love us ! love my sister best ! her strain  
Was caught from Heaven, and bears her there again ;  
Her lot, her place, are with the blessed ! still  
Their angel-harpings on her accents thrill ;  
Still towards their source *her* visions mount and  
    yearn ;  
I am of dust and unto it return !

“ My eyes are fixed upon the ground, they cling  
With timid trust to each familiar thing ;  
My voice is but an Echo, lingering on  
Round some old temple, whence the Gods are gone ;

---

Thou wilt not therefore scorn me ? listen ! She,  
The bird of Heaven hath borrowed notes from me !”

Then warbled that clear voice, “ an endless sigh  
My sister’s song would be, but ere it die  
I blend my utt’rance with the closing strain,  
And whisper ‘ all that has been comes again ;’  
I commune with her till her voice, her tone,  
With all their sweetness, pass unto my own ;”

“ She gazes on me till her features take  
A smile of life and promise for my sake,  
And soft and gleaming o’er my pictures, lies,  
Caught from the tearful shining of her eyes  
A rainbow-glory ; we would mingle ever  
Within its light—Oh, love us ! part us never !”

## LOVE IN DEATH.

[In the year 1821, a woman perished in a snow-storm while passing over the Green Mountains in Vermont; she had an infant with her, who was found alive and well in the morning, carefully wrapt in the mother's clothing.]\*

ON the death-darkened air,  
Through the wild storm, amid the drifting  
                  snows,

A voice of murmured soothing blent with prayer,  
Solemn in trustful tenderness, arose.

A mother's spirit in its parting clung  
Unto her child—a mother's soul was stirred  
Through all its depths—a mother's fondness hung,  
And trembled on each faint and faltering word  
Of blessing and farewell; and, as the bird  
Plucks the soft plumage from its downy breast  
To shield its young, and cowers with quivering wing  
More closely o'er them, to her side she prest  
Her babe, and strove, with warmth and sheltering  
To frame within her clasping arms a nest:  
' Sleep! oh, my baby, sleep! the night draws on.

\* Note 4.



Sleep once again upon thy poor mother's breast ;  
Ere yet the morning dawns I shall be gone,  
And thou no more will know such place of rest ;  
    Colder and yet more cold,  
Dark with the storm the wild winds round us sweep,  
Yet still above thy slumber, as of old,  
Thy mother watches. Sleep, thou dear one, sleep !  
    Closer and closer still  
Nestle unto me, darling, safe from harm ;  
Cold, cold, is all without, and deathly chill,  
Only the heart—thy mother's heart—is warm.

    ' Yet there it will be cold,—  
Yes, even there, my child ! and, oh, how soon.  
The snow drifts thickly round us—fold by fold  
Around the sinking form, the weary feet  
That may no longer bear us o'er the wild,  
Silent and swift, a wreathèd winding-sheet  
Is closely drawn : but not for thee, my child !  
No, not for thee ! my parting soul hath striven  
With Him, the merciful—unto this hour,  
Unto its love, its anguish, hath been given  
A spirit of prevailing and of power ;—  
\* And I have borne it from thee ! To his breast  
Death folds me close as I fold thee to mine ;

\* Note 5.

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Cold kisses are upon my cheek—to rest,  
To sleep they woo me, soft and deep as thine :  
A heavy mist steals on—I feel my breath,  
Drawn slowly from me ; yet my love shall keep  
Its watch above thee still, and thou shalt sleep,  
Sleep safely, sweetly, in the arms of DEATH,  
And wake to Life once more ! Kind eyes shall weep,  
And kindly hearts be troubled, when they see  
The sweet unconscious smiling of thy face ;  
For thou wilt smile, and bear no thought of me.

Too young art thou for Grief,  
Too young for Love, my child, for Memory !  
Yet not less fond the last, the lingering kiss,  
Yet not less fervent from the heart the prayer ;  
Because I know thou wilt, darling, miss  
Thy mother in her fondness, in her care !

‘ But he will think of me—  
Thy Father. Thou wilt grow up by his side,  
And ever bring the thought of her that died  
Lonely, but loving, blessing him and thee.

The flower—the flower may fall  
When it hath shielded in its folded breast  
The bud of promise, loveliest,  
Most dear of all.  
And he will not be lone

In sorrow or in joy. *Thy* voice shall fill  
The silence of his soul with many a tone  
That once was mine, and whisper to him still  
Of things long past, and I shall look at him  
Through thy sweet eyes—young, loving eyes, that  
shine

In light and tenderness when these are dim,  
Shall answer his with smiles that once were mine.

Sleep, dearest ! in the night  
Of death thy mother's arms around thee twine  
More closely, that her spirit in its flight,  
May send a message of its love on thine.

‘ The snows will melt away,  
And green leaves rustle light o'er hill and plain ;  
Through the sweet scent of hidden waters stirred,  
And the clear shining after summer rain,  
The blade will spring ; then on strong wing the bird  
Will rise to the blue heaven, ascending slow ;  
The fisher will go forth upon the lake,  
The hunter to the forest with his bow ;  
But far beyond the flight  
Of Indian arrow, far beyond the ken  
Of mountain eagle in his soaring might,  
I shall have passed, returning not again :  
These ancient Hills shall wake

---

Like giants from their slumber at the breath  
Of Spring, and from their lofty summits shake  
The icy chains of stillness and of death ;

But not till they shall hear  
A sound, and move in trembling from their place,  
Not till the mountains and the rocks in fear  
Shall flee, and leave where they have been no trace,  
May I arise. O Saviour ! earth and Heaven  
Shall pass, but Thou endurest. Unto Thee  
I yield my spirit ; Father, bless Thou me !  
Bless with Thy love the child that Thou hast given !'

And in that prayer her fervent spirit passed.  
The deep night fell, the keen and hurrying blast  
Sang her wild dirge ; the straining clasp grew cold,  
Yet pressed the little one with rigid hold  
Still to her heart ; when morning came the child  
Woke peaceful in its Mother's arms and smiled.

## SONG.

A SOUL was in each hour, that sped  
So swiftly past, with Thee ;  
They stay not with their kindred fled,  
But come again to me ;  
As if a sweet amends to pay  
They come my heart to cheer,  
When Thou art gone, because their stay  
Was short when *Thou* wert near !

A soul was in each flower that then  
We gathered ; still they blow,  
And o'er me, ere I sleep, again  
In sweetness come and go ;  
I see them not, but near me set  
Their odours round me weave  
A chain of happy dreams, where yet  
I walk with Thee at Eve !

Our thoughts were like the bees, dear Friend,  
That through the summer hours  
Upon a widening circuit wend,  
Yet never leave the flowers ;  
No marvel they should come again  
With sweetness in their track,  
To show where they were straying then  
And bring the honey back !

## THE LOVER'S QUARREL.

**L**IGHT is the Lover's quarrel, men say—I  
think not so,  
It is the hand we love the best that deals the hardest  
blow,  
And the wounds that come from it the heart is still  
too proud to show

So closes over them ; too proud ? Nay ! Pride is  
not so strong  
As that which fain a hurt would hide although it  
rankle long,  
From soothing that would only chafe, and pity that  
would wrong ;

For Anger born of Love, although like sweetest  
things that turn,  
The bitterest of all, it seem each soft'ning thought  
to spurn,  
Yet owns the country whence it came, and after it  
will yearn,—

And something there is still that brooks no word  
or thought unkind,

And seeks amid its very pain some fond excuse to  
find,  
For what was dear, and may not all at once be cast  
behind ;

I speak of what I know full well, for thus it chanced  
of yore,  
(I know not now where blame should rest so lay it  
at the door  
Of Love, that having given so much, will still exact  
the more.)

With me and Her I love—one Eve our parting was  
in scorn,  
Oh ! dimly, sadly broke the next and many an after-  
dawn,  
With sense of something gone from me, and ever-  
more withdrawn ;

For Sun-rise used within my heart to wake a matin  
chime  
Of bells, that rung me to a strife untold as yet in  
rhyme,  
Though fierce as Dragon-Fight of old—the Lover's  
against Time !

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## THE LAMENT OF THE ROSE.

Founded upon a Fable of Herder's, in which the Rose is represented as complaining that, while all flowers around her alike fade and wither, *she* alone has been selected by mankind as the type of fragility and evanescence.

“ ALL flowers around me fade ! I see them die !  
 They wither from the earth, and leave no trace  
 To breathe the sweetness of a day gone by,  
 Or tell of vanished loveliness and grace !

“ This grass was thick with Vi'lets ; at my feet  
 They sighed, with Spring, their gentle souls away :  
 The wind that wandered from the West was sweet,  
 But the bright Summer came, and where were  
 they ?

“ Upon this mossy bank a sudden shower  
 Falls—with the breeze ; the fragile Cystus flings  
 Her snows, the glory of a Summer hour  
 Shook down, and numbered with forgotten things.



“ Not she alone ; the Sunflower, that above  
Hath constant fixed her broad and lidless eye,  
Hangs all her golden head, smit through with love,  
With love that may not hope, and can but die !

“ But e'en the Valley-Lily, from the sun  
Enshrouded in her cool, dark, glossy leaf,  
Hath withered there in silence, like a nun  
That folds her veil above some hidden grief.

“ Mourn not, sweet children ! even I, your Queen,  
Hath felt a thrill, the presage of decay,  
Steal through my leaves—the Being, that hath been  
A dream of blessedness, must pass away !

“ We have one Destiny, one Lord, the Sun ;  
We feel our souls drawn from us thro' the kiss  
That woke us first from nothing : one by one  
We offer up our lives, a death of bliss.

“ But ye, unthinking race, for whom I strove  
All beauty, sweetness, into one to blend,  
To shed around your path the light of love ;  
How have ye dealt with her that was your friend ?

“ Ye look upon me—little doth avail  
The hue that trembling to my heart-leaf glows ;  
With me ye number all things fleet and frail ;  
Ye say ‘ the vanishing, the fading Rose !’

“ And yet my brief, my transitory stay  
Was long enough to bless you with its breath ;  
Yours was the gentle glory of my day,  
My after-sweetness lingering in death.”

A maiden, passing, hearkened to the Flower ;  
She wore the summer rose, but in her eyes  
Abode the light of many a thoughtful hour,—  
The dewy light of tender memories.

“ Chide not, sweet Rose,” she said, “ all flow’rets  
die ;  
The dews weep o’er them, but we make no moan ;  
They have fulfilled their gentle destiny,—  
Lived out their happy life, and they are gone.

“ But thou, their Queen, we mourn *thy* fleeting stay ;  
In that we treasure thee thy peers above ;  
The fairest, dearest, would we keep alway,  
And wish thy Beauty changeless as our Love !

“ Yet more ! we link, we cherish with thy smile  
The thought of vanished loveliness and grace,  
That blest us with their sweetness for a while,  
Then pass'd away from earth and left no trace ;

“ Sweet flower ! we see the Rose of Life decay,  
The leaves of Youth, of Hope, of Gladness close,  
And fall like thine to earth. Yes ! *then* we say—  
‘ Alas ! the fair, the quickly-fading Rose ! ’ ”

## LORD RONALD.

**N**OW must you think of me as One  
 That in a castle hall,  
 While ruddy glows the blazing hearth  
 In spite of curfew-call,  
 And the broad fire-light flickers free  
 Upon the shield-hung wall,  
 Sits harping there, to steel-clad knights  
 And ladies fair and gay ;  
 While further back stand yeomen tall  
 And old retainers, gray,  
 With grave and listening faces, all  
 Intent upon his lay ;  
 For of the noble Ronald  
 I sing, and now my rhyme  
 Tells of far other days than these,  
 And of the olden time.  
 The good old time, the brave old time  
 Men call it, but I ween  
 That better times than these of ours  
 Or braver, have not been ;  
 With stainless souls among us yet  
 That wear the Ermine's white,

Where strength and gentleness are met  
As once in faithful Knight  
With many a heart that yet can feel  
As Ronald's did, the Love  
That sets the loved one's wish and weal  
Its proper joy above ;  
Yet needs the human mind to look  
Unto a Golden Age,  
And further back in Life's great Book  
Will ever turn the page,  
In haste to breathe a fresher air,  
An atmosphere serene,  
Remembering only present care,  
Forgetting what hath been,  
Forgetting all its childish tears  
And all its after sighs,  
How swift across the gulf of years  
The time-worn spirit flies !  
So fondly to the World's first Youth  
As to those earlier days,  
For tales of lealty and truth  
It turns with love and praise.

" Fair fall Lord Ronald"  
The warder sung out loud,  
As Ronald passed beneath the gate  
Upon his charger proud ;

And greeting him upon his way,  
Let him ride north or south,  
“ Fair fall Lord Ronald ”  
Was heard from every mouth ;  
Old men that dozed before the fire  
Came hobbling to the door,  
And women held their children higher  
To have one look the more,  
And the stout smith left the blazing brand  
And flung his hammer down,  
As Ronald of the Open Hand  
Rode slowly up the town.  
“ Fair fall the noble Ronald,”  
Let him ride east or west,  
How fast unto his slightest beck  
The thronging vassals prest ;  
Some for Lord Ronald’s gifts the while  
Were fain to be his thrall,  
And some that thought Lord Ronald’s smile  
Was a better gift than all ;  
But were it for his noble heart,  
Or were it for his purse,  
There was none e’er followed Ronald  
That ever was the worse ;  
And still the more he flung away,  
The more was his to fling ;

Above his fields a summer's day  
The bird might tire its wing ;  
There was no Lord in all the land  
So great or rich as he,  
Still may the free and open hand  
Be filled as full and free !  
Some said it was the widow's prayer  
That followed him with peace,  
And the blessing of the fatherless  
That wrought him such increase ;  
For Ronald's hand so strong in fight  
( And this was in the time—  
The wild old time when might made right )  
Was never stained with crime ;  
And men around were wont to say,  
When friends were cold and slow,  
That better worth than such as they  
Were Ronald as a foe ;  
He had but one word for his foes,  
“ Strike not the fallen, spare ; ”  
But one word for his friends at close  
Of fight, and that was “ share.”  
“ But what hast thou, Lord Ronald ? ”  
They spake to him one day,  
“ What hast thou kept unto thyself,  
That thou givest all away ? ”

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Then he made answer with a smile  
And with a merry jest,  
“Nay! ill it were I should outshare  
Myself, among the rest;  
Free hand can still hold close enough  
The thing it prizes best.”  
But what doth Ronald prize the best?  
He gave his golden chain  
For a minstrel’s crying “Largesse,”  
And singing of a strain;  
He gave his cloak, with miniver  
Set round with many a fold  
Unto a beggar by the way,  
To keep him from the cold;  
To friend or follower he gave  
His gallant red roan steed,  
His true and tried Toledo blade  
That hath served him well at need;  
His merlin with the silver bells  
That took the boldest flight,  
And the good shirt of Milan steel  
That saved him once in fight;  
And none dared look on aught of his  
And call it brave or fine,  
For the next word that Ronald spoke  
Was ever “it is thine;”



What was it then Lord Ronald prized  
So far above the rest,  
That still unto himself he kept  
The thing he loved the best?

## PART II.

AN ancient woman sat alone  
At nightfall, with her look  
Fixed on the fire, as if she read  
Its embers like a book ;  
Her hands were folded on her knee,  
Long had they ceased to twine  
The filmy flax-threads from the reel  
With finger sure and fine ;  
Her face was set ; an ice-bound lake  
Wears not a stiller look,  
Unstirred by current from beneath,  
By passing breeze unshook,  
So passionless, it seemed a mould  
By Death already cast,  
When sudden over it a gleam  
Of wintry sunshine past,  
And o'er her faded features spread  
A flush of joy and pride,

---

To hear Lord Ronald's stately tread  
And see him at her side.  
" Welcome unto these failing eyes !  
*Thy* first looks were on me—  
Thy nurse, that stilled thy infant cries,  
And soothed thee on my knee.  
And may mine, Lord Ronald, ere I die,  
Be turned the last on thee :  
Then she arose and kissed his hand,  
And laid it reverently  
Upon her heart, " what seeks my son  
At such an hour with me ? "

Then Ronald leant his thoughtful brow  
Upon his hand ; his eyes  
Were fixed on hers ; " I know that thou  
Art true, and count thee wise ;  
Yet hold not with the churls " he said  
And smiled, " that thou hast riven  
From spirits of the air or deep  
The hidden things of Heaven ;  
And yet I seek thee, for I deem  
Thou hast a surer key  
Of things on earth, that are or seem  
To pierce the mystery."  
She smiled, but sadly ; " true, my son,

No wizard page I turn,  
But one whose deep and hidden lore  
Is full as hard to learn ;  
They that with spirits in their hour  
Have striven, still with pain  
Have paid for mastery and power,  
With loss for every gain ;  
Even so, my son, a heavy weird  
Lies on them, that through strife,  
And weariness, and loss, have wrung  
The secret out of Life !”

Lord Ronald mused again, then spoke,  
“ *Thou* knowest me, the rest  
Deem still, that with all else I share  
The heart within my breast ;  
Because I was not born to look  
On woe or weal unmoved,  
And many are there I have served—  
Yet \*two that I have loved,  
Henry and Sybil ; nay, perchance  
*They* also have not guessed  
That they alone of all the world  
Are folded in my breast,

\* Note 6.

And also deem of me as one  
Who loveth none the best ;  
For all too seldom doth the heart  
Win back its measure just,  
Too seldom wins the perfect love,  
The free and perfect trust ;  
All is not as it used to be  
With Sybil ; she doth fold  
Her thoughts from me ; I read them not,  
But feel that still untold  
Hath something come between us two,  
That never was of old ;  
I ever thought she loved me well ;  
Nay ! she *doth* love me ! still  
The heart can love but to its power,  
And not unto its will ;  
Its wealth is not for prizing set,  
Its gifts must still be free,  
Well saith the Maker,  
“ *Neber, yet,  
Went Love to Mastery.* ”  
Mother ! my speech is but my thought,  
And both are rude and plain,  
I cannot sing to ladies' eyes  
In Minnesinger's strain ;  
But this I know, it is not Love .

That strives not to its best,  
All other earthly aims above  
To make the loved one blest.  
Ye need but give a beggar gold  
If ye would see him gay,  
Or give a child its toy to hold,  
Ye cannot miss the way ;  
But with the heart 'tis not like these,  
And ye must let it chuse,  
(If ye would give it joy or ease)  
To have or to refuse ;  
What skills it all that mine could give  
For Sybil, when, perchance,  
More power to gladden her's may live  
Within a stranger's glance !”

He fixed upon that aged face  
A troubled eye, that sought  
E'en while it dreaded, there to trace  
The answer to his thought ;  
Her pale lips trembled ; to herself  
She muttered low and weak,  
“ Nay ! never *yet hath Truth* wrought ill,  
Though it were hard to speak,”  
Then spreading forth her withered hands,  
She spake full solemnly,

---

“ It has been thine through life, my son,  
To draw Love after thee !  
May the best blessing thou hast won,  
And may the truest prayer  
That ever rose for thee to Heaven,  
And met together there,  
Be with thee now, and come betwixt  
Thy spirit and Despair.”  
Then with a feeble step and slow  
She rose, and in his ear,  
She whispered for a moment low,  
Though none were by to hear ;  
Lord Ronald covered up his face ;  
He spoke no word, I trow,  
But one that from his heaving breast  
Burst “ Thou, and even Thou.”  
And when he raised his brow a mark  
That was not there before  
Was set, and something from his look  
Was gone, that came no more ;  
And at his heart there was a thought  
That left it not ; I wis ;  
“ Would it had been an enemy,  
Whose hand had wrought me this !”

## PART III.

WITHIN the tangled wood-walks deep,  
The flowers are drenched with dew  
So thick, and overweighed with sleep  
So heavily, that few  
As slowly, gorgeously the sun  
Breaks through a golden mist,  
Have held as yet their drooping heads  
Up to him to be kissed ;  
Oh ! sweet the breath of summer morn,  
Let it meet us where it will,  
Sweet as the silence of a Thought  
That words may never fill,  
The freshness of its unworn smile  
So joyous, yet so still !  
Lord Ronald from his castle wall  
Gazed down the grassy steep,  
And saw beneath him smooth and wide  
The level Champaign sweep ;  
On the broad river here and there  
Flung like a silver snake,  
On many a farm and homestead fair  
He marked the sunrise break ;

---

On many a village ; then he seemed  
To tell them o'er, yet sighed,  
As if some thought awoke within  
That was not kin to pride :  
And, pausing suddenly, he called  
To one that passed below,  
“ Ha Brother! thou art early forth  
With dawn, to track the roe !  
Come up, for I would speak with thee ;  
Trust me, thou shalt not rue,  
Though I should keep thee till the sun  
Drinks from the grass the dew.”  
Then lightly Henry climbed the steep,  
And answered gay and free,  
“ Fair brother, little worth were I  
To grudge an hour to thee,  
From the best quarry that e'er yet  
Spread out a lure for me.”  
“ Brother,” said Ronald, as he looked  
On Henry's beaming brow,  
“ Stand here with me awhile, and gaze  
Where I am gazing now ;  
All, all is thine by lea and wold,  
All is thine own, for me  
(So aid me Heaven) from Paynim hold  
The blessed shrine to free



I go; Nay, stay me not in this,  
A vow upon me lies;”  
For Henry broke upon his speech  
With passion and surprise,  
“ Let them go to the Holy Wars,  
The hard of heart, that leave  
No soul of all that call them Lord,  
That after them will grieve;  
The fierce of hand, for whose red sins  
Stern penance may retrieve;  
But far be such a thought from thee,  
Whom all men love and bless,  
Foul wrong it were that *thou* shouldst go  
And leave them fatherless,  
That wait and follow on thy hand  
For succour and redress.”  
“ Brother, I treasure up thy love,  
Although thy words are lost;  
Bethink thee, well my soul ere this  
Hath reckoned up the cost;  
Still have I striven for right, yet now  
The times are wild and rude—  
Hard for a man at every hour  
To do the thing he would;  
Hard, hard, to keep the spirit pure,  
The hand unstained with blood!

---

Brother ! I feel that none may need  
    (As Holy Gospels tell)  
Heaven's boon and mercy more than they  
    Of whom all men speak well ;  
For there are thoughts that in the heart  
    Awake as if from sleep,  
Unknown to any but the Eye  
    That looks upon that Deep.  
Enough—rule thou for me, and be  
    Still to the vassals kind,  
That they may never bring their Lord  
    Too sadly unto mind ;  
And let the ancient feuds die out ;  
    Trust me, enough of strife,  
Enough, without our own unrest  
    Is laid upon our Life ;  
Keep up the House's ancient name  
    And live in bounty free,  
Keep all, dear brother, till I come  
    And ask it back of thee ! ”  
But quick spoke Henry, “ Gladly now  
    I share in what is thine,  
But little joy if thou wert gone  
    To have it all for mine ;  
I love not gifts so well, for them  
    The Giver to resign !

I know not what hath come to thee  
That ever wert so kind,  
That thou canst turn from all things loved,  
And shake them from thy mind,  
As lightly as the thistle's down  
Is lifted by the wind ;  
If all the old love waxes cold  
For brother or for thrall,  
Yet is there one that used of old  
To be more dear than all.  
And Sybil—doubtest thou my love  
For Sybil? since the hour  
When the good knight, her father, fell,  
And from the leagured tower  
I bore her in these arms through flame  
And sword, from foeman's power,  
Safe have I shielded her from harm  
And nursed her as a flower,  
But not to wander far away  
And leave her at the last,  
Had I not known her horoscope  
'Mid happier stars was cast ;  
Soon in its brighter lines will merge  
All traces of the past !  
I think she loves thee well, and thou—  
Nay ! strive not yet to keep

---

Thy heart from me, for Love will out  
Like Murder, e'en in Sleep.  
Thyself must woo and win—for me  
I cannot aid, though fain,"  
He said and smiled, "on maiden's heart  
Small hold hath Suzerain!"  
But Henry's dark eye flashed; he stood  
Uncertain; seldom given  
To mortal heart to hear the gates  
Roll back that bar its Heaven,  
And still it pauses o'er their sound  
As doubtful of its bliss;  
At length he bent his knee to ground  
His brother's hand to kiss,  
"For much my soul to thine was bound  
But ne'er for aught like this!"

## PART IV.

RING softly out, sweet chapel bells,  
Upon the summer air,  
Ring softly, for the bridal dawn  
O'er Heaven is breaking fair,  
The bride is blushing like a rose  
And the wedding guests are there;

And in Lord Ronald's castle  
Is feasting high and free,  
Thrice welcome all that will to share  
Its cheer and revelry :  
" There is no hand like Ronald's,"  
So sang the minstrels all,  
" There is no eye like Ronald's  
To light up bower or hall ;  
There is no smile like Ronald's  
Though now it is not gay,  
The sunshine will be off our souls  
When once it is away ;  
Strike high the merry harps ; let none  
Undrained the wine-cup leave ;  
Speed, Ronald, speed ! when THOU art gone  
Is time enough to grieve ! "

" There is no smile like Ronald's,"  
The truest, tenderest heart  
That keenest feels the wound, can still  
The best abide the smart ;  
There is no smile like Ronald's,  
Although his lip be wan,—  
Slow spake the Priest, " Who giveth now  
This woman to this man ? "  
" I," said Lord Ronald, in his own

---

Her lily hand he took  
But let it fall again, it seemed  
As then his spirit shook  
'Twixt life and death, so wild his eye,  
So ashen grew his look ;  
“ Look to the noble Ronald,  
He falls ;” but swift and fain  
The quick blood mustered to his cheek,  
“ 'Twas but a sudden pain”  
He said, and slowly raised his hand  
To take the Bride's again ;  
But in the set, stern tones, that none  
May hear and disallow,  
Broke Henry in “ Forbear, let all  
Withdraw—sweet bride and thou—  
This is no place for thee ! look well  
Unto her ;” with a sign  
He bade them hence ; “ Now, Brother, none .  
Betwixt my soul and thine  
Shall come but God ! the dead beneath,  
The holy Heavens above,  
These will not come to trouble truth  
Or stand between our Love ;  
Take back thy fatal gift ! for me  
All joy in it is lost ;  
The price of blood is on it, now

That I have learnt its cost !  
I would not seek to build my bower  
With wrecks of ocean wave,  
Or wear upon my breast the flower  
That grew upon a grave ;  
Take back thy fatal gift ; for me  
More cold than spectre-kiss  
Would ever come the thought of thee  
Betwixt me and my bliss ;  
Would, brother, that thy soul had dealt  
More true with mine in this !  
I never sought for Sybil's love,  
My own was still unspoken,  
It asked not, gave not, ever sign  
In word, or outward token,  
Until thou saidest " She is thine."  
Then all at once the strife  
Was over, and at last it breathed  
The happy breath of life ;  
My heart was fond and credulous,  
Thy light words made it err,  
Fool, fool, to deem that any thus  
Unmoved, could part with *her* !  
Still " Ronald of the open hand"  
Thy vassals cry with pride,  
Let them not say, " He gave away

---

All, even to his Bride.”  
Let ME go to the wars, if thus  
I may my spirit thrive  
Of having pained the noblest heart,  
The truest one alive !”

Then Ronald strained him to his breast,  
And from his clear blue eye  
There looked a light that told of rest  
That comes through mastery ;  
And on his lip there was a smile,  
And in his voice a tone  
That was not joy, yet something more  
Than it hath ever known ;  
“ Grieve not for me, dear brother, would  
That now my lip could drain  
For ever from thy earthly cup  
The lingering taste of pain ;  
Yet weak is mortal power to bless,  
Though strong is human love ;  
The gifts that have no bitterness  
Are only from above !  
Grieve not for hurt of mine ; I find  
Thy brother-heart was true,  
The poison now is drawn, the wound  
Will not bleed forth anew ;



Two are there I have loved on earth,  
They love me, they are blest ;  
Still, still unto myself I keep  
The thing I prize the best !”

## THE LITTLE SISTER.

Summer.

MY sister raised me to the bed, my mother solemnly  
Rested her hand upon my head, in silence, I could see  
Her eyes were raised to Heaven ; at last she spoke,  
but not to me,  
“ Poor child ! thy Father yet will find a blessing  
left for thee :”  
Then turning unto Amy said, “ to Thee, though yet  
so young,  
I leave a legacy of Love,” the words upon her tongue  
Failed, yet a look told all the rest, and Amy wept,  
and clung  
About her neck, and kissed her then so fondly and  
so fast,  
I only heard a murmured sound of blessing to the last,  
And she was gone ; yet surely then her spirit as it past  
Breathed all its love on Amy’s soul, and lives in it  
again,  
For she has been the mother to me I lost, yet lost  
not then !

And every one is kind to me, but sometimes they  
forget  
Because I have been ill so long, but Amy never yet  
Forgot me, and I often think that seeing her so kind  
Makes all the others kinder still, and keeps it in  
their mind,  
And oft she jests with me, and says, that still as we  
begun,  
Five years before me, all through life she will smoothe  
the path we run ;  
She thinks of me, let her ever be so busy or so gay,  
And happy she must be that has so much to give away ;  
It seems as if her joyous heart took in a double share  
Of all the gladness of the world, the more to have  
to spare ;  
And every one is wanting her, that is their joy and  
pride,  
But still she says her happiest days are those that  
side by side  
We spend together ; far beneath the Castle where  
we dwell  
Sinks deep, and low, and sudden down, a rocky,  
woody dell ;  
It seems as if, by chasm rift, the Earth had flung in  
there,

---

In haste to fill the yawning gap, all goodly things  
and rare,  
For I never saw a place so wild, so lonely, or so fair,  
I never heard the sweet birds sing so loud as they  
do there,  
Calling each other, morn and eve, across the narrow  
glen,  
As if they sung "joy," only "joy" a hundred times  
again,  
And all except their song is hushed; the wind that  
hath its will [Ghyll,  
O'er all without, can never find its way within the  
And only rocks the tall tree tops while all beneath  
is still;  
And there at evening lingeringly, the golden sun-  
beams stray  
All up and down the grassy slopes, and seem to lose  
their way  
Among the trees, till every bole is touched with  
ruddy light,  
And all the pebbles in the brook are flashing wet  
and bright;  
The brook that through the sultry day, with waters  
clear and brown,  
From rocky shelving ledge to ledge, still slips and  
gurgles down,

And chafes and murmurs round about broad bur-  
dock leaves outspread,  
And great stones slippery with moss that choke its  
shingly bed,  
Till every here and there awhile for quietness makes  
stay  
In dark, deep hollows of a hand that holds it on its  
way,  
Where all things that are glossy-smooth and moist,  
and green and cool,  
Drip from the overhanging rock and cluster round  
the pool,  
And forth from ev'ry crevice and cleft peep lovely  
plants and rare,  
As if they were some costly theft half thrust for  
hiding there,  
That Earth would keep unto herself because they  
are so fair,  
For never, save in such fairy-nooks they flourish  
anywhere !

Not far from this a ferny bank uprises in the dell,  
With thick dry heath o'ergrown, and moss that seems  
to heave and swell  
Unto the touch, and fox-gloves wave o'er all with  
crimson bell :

---

Here Amy has me brought, and here through half  
the summer day  
We sit and talk, or oftener dream the quiet hours  
away ;  
And, lying in the shadow, mark the dark leaves  
glistening bright  
Shoot up and flash in elfin spears and javelins of  
light,  
Or listen to the wordless song, the story without end,  
That summer woods through all their leaves, and  
falling waters, send ;  
Till sometimes Amy will arise and up and down the  
brook,  
Flit light from stone to stone, and peer within each  
leafy nook,  
Or diving 'mid the boughs, awhile I see her not,  
but hear  
Her singing loud behind their screen to show me she  
is near.  
One day we marked some flowers that grew so high  
upon the rock,  
“ They feel themselves so safe ” I said, “ they look  
as if to mock  
And shake their little heads at us ” — “ but I will tame  
their pride  
And take them in their very nest ; ” then Amy  
laughing, cried,

And up the rock with light sure step she sprung,  
and ever higher  
Kept clambering up the slippery stair, and held by  
bush and brier,  
Until at last the summit gained, she clapped her  
hands, and flung  
The flowers down to me, and stamped her little foot,  
and sung  
Till all the woody vale awoke its echoes to prolong  
The song that floated o'er its depths, the sweet and  
self-same song,  
“ Joy, only joy,” that all the birds had sung in it so  
long,—  
And singing all the way she came, once more she  
neared the ground,  
But now with slower step, and ere she took her last  
light bound,  
To stay herself a moment's space, she clasped a  
birchen tree  
That grew upon the rock, and waved her other hand  
to me ;  
When she stopped singing all at once, and o'er her  
face a look  
Passed, as if then some sudden blame unto her heart  
she took,  
And when she reached me where I sat, she spoke  
not for awhile,

---

But turned her head, and when again she raised her  
eyes, the smile  
Was only on her lip ; I saw that all its glee was gone,  
And when at last she spoke 'twas not of what she  
thought upon ;

And I made answer lightly too, but silent and untold  
Was something drawn between us then that loosens  
not its hold,  
And oft I think within myself, sweet sister, could  
you see  
This heart of mine that loves you so, you would  
never grieve for me !

## PART II.

### Winter.

When Amy was a child, our old, fond nurse, would  
say that she  
Was the fairest flower of the flock, best apple on  
the tree ;  
And still as she grew up, at home we knew that she  
was fair,  
But seldom thought of it because we saw her always  
there ;



So, when we came to Town, almost it took us by  
surprise  
To learn how beautiful she was through other people's eyes,  
For all eyes turned to follow Her that still so little  
guessed  
The secret, that she oft has turned, unconscious,  
with the rest  
To see what beauteous form drew near ; for many,  
bright and gay  
Are there, yet none like Amy (so at least I hear  
them say)  
That move with such an untrained grace, and bear  
upon their looks  
The freshness of the breezes light, and sunny, singing  
brooks,  
As if the wild, free, harmless things by stream and  
wood and hill,  
That had her to themselves so long, played light  
about her still ;  
It is, they say, as when you meet in crowded thorough-fare,  
Some sight or scent that o'er you brings a breath  
of country air,  
With the hay-fields and the corn-fields, and the  
sweetness only there.

---

I watch her from my window now, I look down  
through the park  
To see her come in from her ride before the day  
grows dark,  
And she looks up to meet my eye and waves her  
hand to me,  
As when upon the slippery rock, she held the birchen  
tree,  
And springs to earth as light and free, as if her  
footstep fell  
Still on the soft, dry, springing moss and purple  
heather-bell !

We spend no days together now because our pre-  
sent lives  
Are threads too far apart to meet, though Amy ever  
strives  
To knit them close where'er she may, and ever  
seeks to twine  
And weave with mine, as it runs on, a bright and  
silver line ;  
At night I hear a quick, light step, and sudden in  
the room,  
A flutter 'mid its quietness, a shining on its gloom,  
She comes, all rustling silken-soft, all floating warm  
and bright,

And glimmers through the dusk in robes of gos-  
samer and light,  
Like a swan that spreads its white, full plumes upon  
the breast of night ;  
She comes to ask me for her flowers, for none will  
Amy wear  
Unless I bind them on her breast, or twine them  
in her hair,  
And she says that nothing would go well, or please  
her at the ball  
Without she has a kiss from me the last, last thing  
of all ;  
And still when she comes back again, while all is  
fresh and new  
Upon her mind, like fairy tales it is (but these are  
true)  
To hear of all that she has seen, — the wondrous  
things and fair,  
Until it sometimes seems to me that I myself was  
there,  
But still she ends “ Thou little one, I leave thee,  
yet I find  
Not one among them all I love like Her I leave  
behind !  
  
“ Not One I love so well as thee ;” but this was  
at the first,

---

And then a change came over her, it seemed as if  
    she nursed  
Some hidden thought; as folded close within the  
    rose's breast,  
The sweetest, reddest leaf lies curled, and only to  
    be guessed  
By the fragrance and the trembling light it sheds  
    through all the rest;  
And kinder *She* could never grow, yet softer now  
    I deemed,  
And graver, tenderer, her smile; yet strange to me  
    it seemed  
That gayer, brighter still she found each brilliant  
    scene, and well  
She loved to go, yet nothing now was ever left to tell:  
Upon a low seat by the fire she sat one night, and  
    leant  
Her cheek upon her hand, and while her drooping  
    head she bent  
To me, the warm light streamed around, and seemed  
    her brow to bless  
With a sunny Glory, and a crown of glowing love-  
    liness,  
More bright than were the scarlet flowers that I was  
    wreathing then  
About her hair, as light I laughed and said "no  
    more again

Will I take, Amy, all this pains to make thee gay  
and fair,  
That never bringest me a word of all that passes there  
To pay me for my lovely flowers ; make much of  
these and prize  
This wreath, because it is the last :” but then from  
Amy’s eyes  
Her soul looked forth,—“ Yes Annie ! yet, perchance,  
some future day  
Thou wilt twine me yet another one, more sweet  
though not so gay,”  
And kissed me then because I wept, and whispered  
in my ear  
“ Well will He love my darling, else he had never  
been so dear !”  
  
I wept ; but not as Amy thought, in fear to lose  
her love,  
For I know that in the heart as in the blessed Home  
above,\*  
There is ever room that grows no less however many  
share,  
There is room enough and Love enough for all the  
angels there !  
I wept, but ’twas for joy, to think that now her heart  
would find

\* Note 7.

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A heart to answer her's again, and pay her back in  
kind

For all the love that met me new with every dawn-  
ing day,

For all she gave, and gave, untired ; for all *I* could  
not pay,—

More blest to give than to receive, yet *both* are  
surely blest,—

Long, long may Amy joy in both, to prove which  
is the best !

## NOTES.

NOTE 1, Page 46. *The Summer Snow.*

“ As the blossoms fell off, pale and discoloured, early in May, the leaves spoke thus ; ‘ These weak and useless flowers are scarcely born ere they wither, while our firmer growth, but all the more broad, and green, and shining, outlasts the heat of summer, and at length after long months of well-deserving, spent in rearing and sheltering earth’s finest fruits, we go to rest, decked with honorable colours of renown, under the cannon-thunder of the storm ;’ But the fallen blossoms answered ‘ We sink to death willingly, for we have already borne our fruit.’

“ Quiet and little noticed among our daily paths and dwellings ( too soon passing away ! ) noble benefactors, without name on earth or record in its history ! unknown mothers ! ye share not in the glitter of renown, ye pass beneath no arch of triumph ; but be not therefore discouraged ; ye are the blossoms !” *Jean Paul Richter.*

NOTE 2, Page 56. *Not the cooling Lotus leaf.*

The flower and leaf of the lotus are used by Hindoo writers as the type of all grace and beauty, and they suppose the latter to possess a peculiar efficacy in soothing grief, and allaying anxiety, or any other mental quietude.

## NOTE 3, Page 88.

*Thou art patient, for Thou art strong.*

“God is patient, because he is eternal.” BOSSUET.

NOTE 4, Page 127. *Love in Death.*

An affecting incident which might serve as a companion to this story, was noticed in a Donegal paper of the Winter of 1847-48. “A little girl of eleven years of age and her brother, about two years younger, were overtaken by a snow storm when crossing the Pettigo Mountains, towards the evening; they were found the next morning lying close together, both dead, the little boy with his sister’s shawl round his neck, and her flannel petticoat wrapped about his feet, she having possibly sacrificed her own life in a vain attempt to sustain that of her brother.”

## NOTE 5, Page 128.

*And I have borne it from thee,*

It is related of the Great Baber that when upon a certain time, Humaioon, his eldest son, fell dangerously ill, and all hope of his recovery was given up, it was remarked to him by one of his sages, that in such a case the Almighty had sometimes deigned to receive a man’s most valuable possession as a ransom for the life of his friend. Baber thereupon exclaimed that next to the life of Humaioon, his own life was what he most valued, and that he would devote it as a sacrifice for his son. His counsellors entreated him to revoke the vow, and give



the great diamond obtained at Agra, reported to be the most valuable in the world, but he persisted in declaring no jewel to be so dear as Life, and, walking three times round the body of the dying Prince, a ceremony solemnly observed in sacrifices and heave-offerings, retired, and prayed earnestly to God, and after some time was heard to say "I have borne it away, I have borne it away." The Moslem Historians affirm that Humaioon immediately began to recover, and Baber proportionably to decline. CALDECOTT'S *Life of Baber*.

NOTE 6, Page 150.

*Many are there I have served,—  
Yet two that I have loved.*

"Yes! many thousands, Max, have I enriched,  
Rewarded them with lands, requited them  
With honours and with place.—THEE HAVE I LOVED;  
My heart, my very self have given to Thee;  
They were all strangers, Thou the House's child.  
*Wallenstein.*

NOTE 7, Page 176.

The heart is like Heaven; the more angels, the more room. *German Proverb.*



... is under a  
... n from the



